



Blueprint for Maryland's Future: 2024 Implementation Plan

Harford County Public Schools

May 2024; Part 1 System-wide & Part 2 Pillars 1-5

BLUEPRINT
for our students' future 



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BOARD OF EDUCATION OF HARFORD COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN

MISSION • Each student will attain academic and personal success in a safe and caring environment that honors the diversity of our students and staff.

VISION • We will inspire and prepare each student to achieve success in college and career.

CORE VALUES

- We empower each student to achieve academic excellence.
- We create reciprocal relationships with families and members of the community.
- We attract and retain highly skilled personnel.
- We assure an efficient and effective organization.
- We provide a safe and secure environment.

LONG-TERM GOALS

GOAL 1 Prepare every student for success in postsecondary education and career.

GOAL 2 Engage families and the community to be partners in the education of our students.

GOAL 3 Hire and support highly effective staff who are committed to building their own professional capacity in order to increase student achievement.

GOAL 4 Provide safe, secure, and healthy learning environments that are conducive to effective teaching and learning, creativity and innovation.



Director of Strategic Initiatives & Blueprint Implementation Coordinator

Katie M. Ridgway

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Systemwide Blueprint Response Guidance

*The following are the instructions from the Accountability & Implementation Board (AIB) and the Maryland State Department of Education to Maryland Local Education Agencies, including Harford County Public Schools (HCPS), for submission of **Part 1: Systemwide** for the 2024 Blueprint Implementation Plan submissions.*

The Blueprint for Maryland's Future will improve the quality and equity of Maryland's education system so that ALL Maryland students, regardless of where they live, their household income, race, ethnicity, gender, language spoken at home, disability, and any other unique characteristic, can leave high school globally competitive and prepared for success in postsecondary education, work, and life.

To reach this outcome, Maryland public schools must transform by rethinking and redesigning existing policies and practices to create a system that equitably serves all students and prepares them for success. This is your opportunity to share how your district has been approaching this change and its plans for the future.

Be sure to include or address the following points in your response:

- How are your district's vision, goals, strategic plan, and other system and school-level plans aligned to the Blueprint?
 - consider the connections across pillars and how the expected outcomes of the Blueprint intersect with and align with district programming.
- How your district is communicating its goals and plans with those implementing the Blueprint in the district, including
 - principals and educators;
 - soliciting feedback; and
 - adapting its communication strategies to improve stakeholder understanding of the Blueprint's purpose.
- How your district is making systemic changes to support ongoing Blueprint implementation;
 - consider the strategies that have and have not been successful in your approach to reaching the Blueprint's expected outcomes.
- Your district's three greatest challenges to Blueprint implementation, including
 - the rationale for selecting them,
 - the specific initiatives/programs/strategies the district will implement to address them, and
 - how your district will transform to implement these strategies effectively.
- How the district will monitor progress towards addressing its three greatest challenges to reaching the Blueprint's expected outcome.

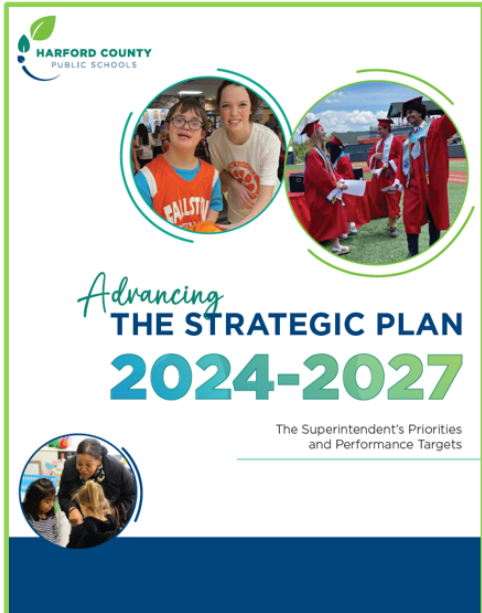
Criteria for Success

- Describes how the district is creating a system that equitably serves all students and prepares them for success in alignment with the Blueprint's expected outcome
- Addresses all of the bullets in its response clearly, concisely, and comprehensively

A. Alignment within HCPS

HCPS has strategically aligned districtwide initiatives through several key mechanisms. First, the HCPS guidance document *Advancing the Strategic Plan* serves as a bridge between the Board of Education's (BOE) strategic plan and district priorities, integrating performance targets aligned with the Blueprint for Maryland's Future. Second, a revamped HCPS *annual report* on performance targets provides a comprehensive overview of progress towards these goals. Third, HCPS ensures clarity through a learning continuum by delineating *student milestones* and achievements from Kindergarten Readiness Assessment to graduate outcomes, incorporating the HCPS *learner attributes* and Blueprint milestones such as college and career readiness. Fourth, live *data dashboards* cater to administrators, counselors, school performance and improvement specialists, teachers, and district leaders, facilitating real-time monitoring and support to schools in their pursuit of aligned goals.

HCPS has debuted a new 'Advancing the Strategic Plan' & 'Annual Report.'



<p>GOAL 1</p> <p>Prepare every student for success in postsecondary education and career.</p>	<p>➤➤➤</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Career Driven B Graduate Outcomes C Learner Attributes D Personalization for Academic Needs E Behavioral Support
<p>GOAL 2</p> <p>Engage families and the community to be partners in the education of our students.</p>	<p>➤➤➤</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Transparency B Customer Service C Collaborative Governance
<p>GOAL 3</p> <p>Hire and support highly effective staff who are committed to building their own professional capacity in order to increase student achievement.</p>	<p>➤➤➤</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Elevating Educators B Culture of Gratitude C Talent Pathways
<p>GOAL 4</p> <p>Provide safe, secure, and healthy learning environments that are conducive to effective teaching and learning, creativity, and innovation.</p>	<p>➤➤➤</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Safety and Security B Resource Stewardship C Operational Efficiency

Released on March 6, 2024, *Advancing the Strategic Plan* provides direct connections across Blueprint pillars with the BOE Strategic Plan. Pillars 1, 3, and 4 are woven into the priorities and targets outlined within BOE Goal 1, which focuses on enhancing student achievement. This goal encompasses priorities such as individualized student support, post College and Career Readiness (CCR) pathways, graduate outcomes (including college and career readiness), and comprehensive behavioral support. Pillar 5 aligns with BOE Goal 2, which emphasizes family engagement and collaborative governance, as well as with Goal 4, which underscores stewardship for our learning environments and resources. Furthermore, Pillar 2 directly aligns with BOE Goal 3, which centers on the recruitment and support of highly effective staff. This alignment with Pillar 2 is evident through initiatives like the career ladder, the cultivation of a positive organizational culture, and the Talent Pathways project aimed at creating grow-your-own initiatives within the district. All priorities are working together to achieve our district vision:

“We will inspire and prepare each student to achieve success in college and career.”

The following **performance targets** are included in [Advancing the Strategic Plan](#) and in baseline data published March 6, 2024, in a newly released [HCPS Annual Report](#).

Pillar 1: Early Childhood

- Increase the number of 3- and 4-year-olds enrolled in full-day PreK each year.
- Increase percentage of students served by Pre-K programs who demonstrate Kindergarten readiness.

Pillar 2: Elevating Educators

- Increase number of teachers opting to participate in the career ladder after negotiated and implemented.
- Increase the percentage of teachers of color to more closely align with student population and to improve student outcomes.
- Increase the percentage of conditionally certified teachers who obtain their standard professional certificate.
- Increase number of current HCPS employees not currently in a teaching position working towards teacher certification each year.
- Increase the number of HCPS alumni hired as HCPS employees each year in all positions.
- Increase the number of students in future teacher programs including Teacher Academy of Maryland (TAM), EdRising, or peer-tutoring.
- Increase number of interns serving in HCPS classrooms each year.

Pillar 3: North Star / College & Career Readiness

- Increase the percentage of HCPS graduates who meet the criteria for at least one of the three North Star outcomes.
- Increase the percentage of students considered CCR ready by the Blueprint.
- Increase the percentage of 9th grade students considered on-track by the Blueprint.
- Increase number of students completing apprenticeships.
- Match HCPS development of magnet programs with local and global economies.
- For career pathway planning, increase percentage of students completing designated career modules through the Naviance College and Career Platform.
- Increase the percentage of students each year who achieve a grade level proficiency or equivalent on designated HCPS reading, writing, and math assessment tools or MCAP.

Pillar 4: Student Supports

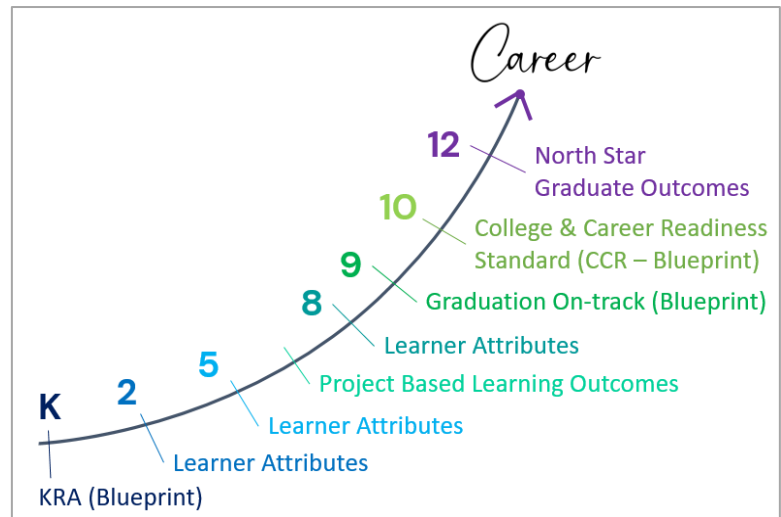
- Provide every student/family seeking mental and behavioral health support with appropriate resource(s).
- Increase participation in the student Wellness Needs Assessment for students grades 3-12.
- Increase positive childhood experience score for students using the standards for healthy outcomes from positive experiences (H.O.P.E.) framework.
- Improve learner outcomes in reading and math for all unique school designation categories.
- Reduce achievement gaps in all unique school designation categories for reading and math based on state and county averages.

Pillar 5: Foundation & Accountability

- All advisory committees have at least 25% representation outside of central office staff to include teachers, parents/guardians, administrators, and community partners.
- Increase the number of community and businesses identified as partners.
- Meet Blueprint state requirements, Md. Education Article, §5-234, for allocation of resources directly to schools by 2024-2025.
- Allocate resources based on data supported needs of students, staff, and schools.

HCPS has created comprehensive learning milestones & data dashboards.

HCPS employs a **comprehensive milestone continuum** to guide school performance and achievement plans, ESSSA consolidated plans, Title I initiatives, Community School plans, and performance monitoring for both the Blueprint and the BOE strategic plan. This continuum begins with the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment and progresses through various stages, including specific benchmarks in 2nd, 5th, and 8th grades focused on essential **learner attributes** (readers, writers, problem-solvers, healthy, employable). In middle school, HCPS is currently introducing benchmarks oriented towards project-based learning, slated to be implemented in the next two years, enhancing student engagement and skill development for future careers. All of these measures lead to benchmarks within the Blueprint for 9th grade on-track to graduation and college and career readiness by the end of 10th grade. The milestone continuum culminates in HCPS's systemwide North Star outcomes, where students demonstrate their preparedness for success after high school. These outcomes encompass two primary areas: readiness for college, signified by proficiency in college-level coursework or the attainment of college credit, and readiness for a career, indicated by the acquisition of an industry-recognized credential or completion of an apprenticeship, ensuring students are well-equipped for post-high school endeavors.



Data dashboards play a pivotal role in aligning various stakeholders within the district, including teachers, administrators, and central support teams, in monitoring real-time student achievement and related metrics. All benefit from data dashboards by gaining a comprehensive overview of school-wide or district-wide performance trends. By providing insights into specific areas of strength and areas requiring improvement, schools can make data-informed decisions to personalize learning experiences and interventions, ultimately fostering student success. By aggregating data from various sources, including assessments, attendance records, and demographic information, HCPS teams can analyze trends, identify patterns, and assess the effectiveness of system-wide initiatives. HCPS Data Dashboards enables all to align practices and priorities, allocate staff and resources strategically, and provide targeted support to further the outcomes targeted by the Blueprint and by the BOE's strategic plan. Dashboards include but are not limited to 6th and 9th Grade Early Warning Indicators, CCR Student Support Pathway, Graduate Outcomes, Wellness Needs Assessment, Attendance Trends, Dual Enrollment, Reading Inventory and Math Inventory (all levels), School Accountability Profiles, and more. In development are dashboards dedicated to each learner attribute (readers, writers, problem-solvers, healthy, employable). There is also valuable goal and progress data publicly available on the [HCPS State of the District](#) website.

B. Systemwide Communication

Navigating effective communication for the expansive initiatives outlined in the Blueprint presents a formidable yet crucial challenge. **The HCPS Blueprint committee structure, leadership forums and digital engagement initiatives, and comprehensive survey analysis** stand as a multifaceted strategy aimed at fostering system-wide communication and collaboration for the successful implementation of the Blueprint. By leveraging multiple approaches, our goal is to ensure that all stakeholders are not only kept informed but are actively engaged and empowered to contribute meaningfully.

HCPS has an inclusive and comprehensive committee structure.

The HCPS committee structure is a central component of the HCPS communication, vetting, problem-solving, brainstorming, and accountability for implementation of the Blueprint. With each of the four pillars having its own dedicated committee co-chaired by a representative from the HCPS and a community leader, there is a balanced perspective that incorporates both educational expertise and community insight. These committees serve as channels for dialogue and collaboration, ensuring that various stakeholders, including parents, teachers, business partners, community organizations, administrators, central leaders, county partners, and students, are all actively engaged in the decision-making process and can serve as liaisons to professional learning communities, parent groups, student organizations, and community partners. With more than 160 individuals contributing across these committees, including 68 community members, there is a wealth of diverse perspectives and expertise driving forward effective communication at every level of the system. **Reference:** [HCPS Committee and Implementation Structure](#)

The Blueprint is shared in diverse forums and through digital engagement.

Weekly Senior Leadership meetings, biweekly Administrative Leadership team, and biweekly Instructional Leadership Team meetings serve as foundational platforms for updates and ensuring alignment across various Tiers of leadership and disseminating critical information throughout the organization. As a monthly event, the Superintendent of Schools provides systemic updates for Administrative & Instructional Leadership, including principals, supervisors, and system leaders, to remain informed and engaged, extending communication to those directly involved in day-to-day planning. Board of Education presentations offer a governance-level platform for publicly communicating key initiatives and decisions, ensuring transparency and accountability to the broader community.

In addition to these meetings and presentations, the HCPS public facing [website](#) is a centralized repository for comprehensive Blueprint information for the broader Harford County community. We provide consistent dissemination of digital news through various channels such as the Annual Live Teams All-staff Event, Blueprint Newsletter, Superintendent's Bulletin, HCPS 411 Update to all staff, Board of Education Weekly Update, and other digital outlets which ensures that stakeholders are regularly informed and connected. We are committed to thoughtful and varied communication with highlights including milestone reports, videos, and targeted updates tailored to specific groups such as Pre-K teachers, school counselors, instructional coaches, and curriculum leaders. These tailored communication strategies not only ensure that information is disseminated effectively but also demonstrate a proactive approach to engaging various stakeholders in the implementation process. There is progress data (example: number of apprentices) publicly available and updated weekly on the [HCPS State of the District](#) website.

Collectively, these forums and digital communication methods contribute to fostering a culture of transparency, collaboration, and informed decision-making across the entire Harford County community.

[HCPS Blueprint Website](#)

Includes videos, quick guides, required reports, and more.

[January 2023 Comprehensive Board Presentation](#)

[All-Staff Live Teams Event February 2023](#)

[All-Staff Live Teams event March 2024](#)

[Milestone Report](#)

[Newsletter Archive](#)
Sent to all staff, committee members, partners, Board, & elected officials.

[Implementation Plan Survey Analysis](#)

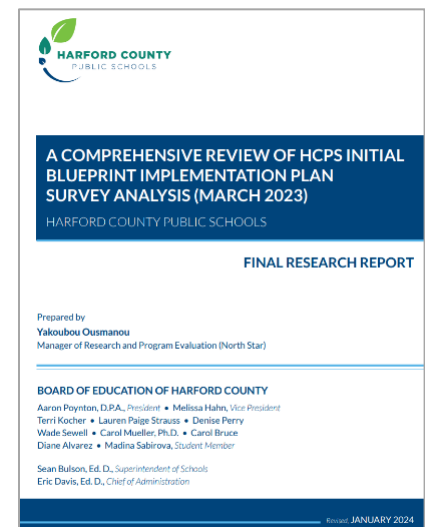
[HCPS State of the District](#)

HCPS conducts systemic surveys and analysis.

Conducting a district-wide survey of the 2023 Initial Blueprint Plan and subsequent research report is an essential engagement activity for program evaluation and taking a pulse on the wider community's perceptions about Blueprint implementation. By soliciting feedback through a survey (advertised in

newsletters, the web, and social media), the district allows wide ranging stakeholders, including parents, teachers, administrators, and community members, to voice their opinions, concerns, and celebrations regarding the Blueprint plan. Moreover, the subsequent [research analytical report](#) serves as a comprehensive analysis of the survey data, providing valuable insights and recommendations for refining and improving the Blueprint plan based on the feedback received. By actively involving stakeholders in this iterative feedback loop, the district promotes a sense of ownership and buy-in, ultimately leading to more effective and sustainable Blueprint initiatives that meet the needs of the entire community. Through these efforts, we strive to ensure that all voices are heard, and that decisions are made in the best interest of our students, educators, and the community at large.

For this survey process, HCPS administered a multi-stakeholder survey in February and March of 2023 on the initial Blueprint Implementation Plan. Respondents were first presented with the complete written draft implementation plan, a short video about the implementation plan, then asked to complete the feedback providing guidance about the implementation plan. Finally, respondents were given an opportunity to write comments regarding which aspects of Blueprint implementation HCPS demonstrates exemplary progress and which aspects of Blueprint implementation HCPS demonstrates a need to improve planning for better progress. The Office of Research and Program Evaluation partnered with Hanover Research to analyze the responses to the survey's open-ended questions. The results of this analysis are used by Blueprint Committees, subject-matter experts, and leadership teams to inform Blueprint implementation efforts and ensure that feedback is acted upon meaningfully. [Reference: A Comprehensive Review of HCPS Blueprint Implementation Plan Survey Analysis](#)



C. Key Decisions and Transformations

Three pivotal decisions have initiated transformative changes within HCPS, propelling the district towards meeting Blueprint requirements and serving every student within this community. First, a strategic shift towards a **career-driven** approach has gained dividends, aligning curriculum and initiatives with the evolving demands of the workforce, thus equipping students with the skills and knowledge needed for success in the modern job market. Second, significant investments in stabilizing staffing and **elevating educators** have started the work needed for long-term stability and quality in our workforce, nurturing a supportive and empowered environment where educators can thrive, and students can flourish. Finally, a commitment to **proactive resource allocation** has ensured that the building blocks are in place to ensure that funding follows the needs of the individual student, that we have usable and accurate data to analyze our resource allocations, and that funds are spent in ways that best benefit student outcomes.

HCPS is career driven.

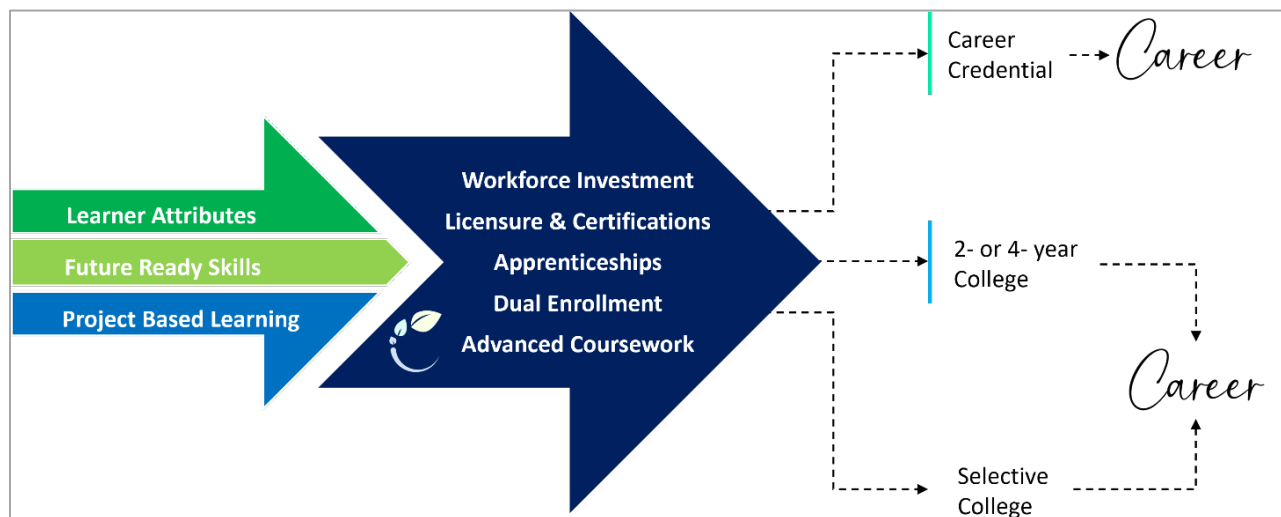
HCPS's focus on being career-driven has been a transformative decision that has reshaped the work of the school system, expanded opportunities for students, promoted educational equity, and enhanced long-term outcomes. Central to this paradigm shift is the North Star Initiative, developed in 2019, which marked a pivotal stride towards equitably valuing career pathways alongside traditional college preparatory coursework. By ensuring that all students complete at least one of the specified goals before graduation (completing college-level work, earning college credits, or obtaining a career credential), HCPS has diversified pathways for students, improving the likelihood of degree attainment and enhancing earning potential. [Reference: Beacon Study of 2021](#)

One of the most promising aspects of the North Star Blueprint initiative is the HCPS Apprenticeship Maryland Program (AMP). Students are matched with employers who provide mentorship, on-the-job training, and educational support, allowing them to gain invaluable industry experience while still in high school. The results of the AMP program have been rapid. In its inaugural year, last year, 15 students completed their apprenticeships. As of today, over 125 students are participating in the registered apprenticeships.

Integral to our career-driven efforts, HCPS's innovative workforce investment program, a non-credit partnership with Harford Community College (HCC), offers students free opportunities to attain industry-recognized certifications, making them attractive candidates for employment post-graduation and providing a seamless transition into credit and noncredit degree programs. Examples include Certified Logistics Associate, Microsoft Office Certification, Windows Computer Support Technician, Help Desk (Security+), and Certified Nursing Assistant.

When North Star began, HCPS's first transformational decision was immediate and critical work of partnership with HCC. This commitment laid the foundation that was greatly accelerated with Blueprint's open access requirements for dual enrollment courses. Our students' access to courses, our ease of interaction with HCC as a partner, and our shared vision have significantly been improved over the last two years, with a framework now allowing students to have up to an entire year of college credit by the time they graduate high school.

These concerted endeavors towards career-driven principles have not only refined the school system's priorities but have also empowered students with expanded opportunities, cultivated equity, and propelled them towards brighter futures. Looking ahead, HCPS is poised to embark on a strategic roadmap through the provided AIB Strategic Facilitator, integrate project-based learning, expand career exploration curriculum and coaching, refine support pathways, and embed future-ready skills, thus ensuring continued progress in our career-driven approach to student and Blueprint outcomes.



HCPS is elevating educators.

HCPS has demonstrated strategic and transformative leadership in elevating educators and advancing the intended outcomes of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future through a series of deliberate decisions and initiatives. First, the implementation of differentiated staffing at Priority Schools starting in 2019 represents a targeted effort to address disparities by adjusting class sizes or ratios at schools based on Free and Reduced Meals (FARMs) rates. This approach aims to provide additional support to students in need, stabilize staffing in high-need schools, and narrow achievement gaps. The HCPS theory of action

regarding elevating educators who serve students in high concentration of poverty is to increase instructional staff, provide additional staffing support, and to work towards differentiated pay, similar to the theory behind the low-performing schools incentive of the Blueprint Career Ladder and minimum school funding model.

Second, an HCPS 7% salary increase enacted in FY2023 was a critical catalyst towards achieving competitive starting salaries and reaching the targeted 10% salary increase goal. This investment not only recognized the value of educators but also enhanced recruitment and retention efforts.

Third, the establishment of the overarching committee "Elevating Educators" was an important step towards HCPS's Blueprint objectives, focusing on diversity recruitment and retention, growing our own talent, and supporting educators pursuing National Board Certification. This holistic approach ensures alignment with broader goals beyond the Career Ladder. Additionally, the formation of a specialty career ladder multi-disciplinary subgroup provided a forum for collaborative efforts to design a model ladder and negotiation parameters that promote professional growth and recognition.

Lastly, the creation of a support system for educators pursuing National Board Certification, facilitated through the Maryland Leads grant, provides systemic support and resources to enhance educator effectiveness and student outcomes. This year, HCPS was able to use Leads funding to offer fee support to educators not meeting the definition of teacher to pursue NBC alongside a teacher in a low-performing school. Through these strategic decisions and initiatives, HCPS is actively investing in its educators, fostering a culture of continuous growth and excellence, and ultimately driving progress towards the overarching goals of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future.



HCPS is committed to resource stewardship.

HCPS has demonstrated thoughtful and purposeful decision-making around resource allocations to effectively meet the intended outcomes of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future. At the forefront of these strategic decisions is the investment in the new Enterprise system, Oracle, initiated in 2023. This significant financial and time investment is critical for HCPS to develop a robust financial modeling and reporting system, enabling informed decision-making, and optimizing resource allocation in alignment with the Blueprint's objectives. Above all else, this decision will transform HCPS financial tracking across categories, programs, and schools, ability to analyze exactly how all funding reaches students, and support models of reallocation or transformation.

Also, HCPS has made targeted decisions regarding resource stewardship impacting specific aspects of the Blueprint. Major examples include:

- 1) HCPS has systemically addressed Pre-K capacity by transitioning half-day programs to full-day and started the process of converting early childhood classrooms in high schools to Pre-K programs. Also to support Pillar 1, HCPS has hired a technical specialist to support private providers.
- 2) In addressing mental and behavioral support, HCPS has leveraged partner resources from private mental health providers and the Harford County Health Department. This strategic partnership-building approach maximizes the impact of resources and services, effectively meeting the diverse needs of students and promoting overall well-being.
- 3) HCPS has effectively leveraged the Maryland Leads grant to kickstart various Blueprint initiatives, including Middle School innovation, Workforce Investment with HCC, National Board Support, Talent Pathways (grow-your-own), and Community Schools. This proactive approach to leveraging federal COVID funding demonstrates HCPS's commitment to advancing the Blueprint's objectives through strategic investments.

- 4) Lastly, HCPS's dedication of district funding to the Talent Pathways project exemplifies its commitment to the recruitment and retention of high-quality teachers, aligning with the goals of Pillar 2 of the Blueprint. This targeted allocation of resources towards talent development further strengthens HCPS's capacity to attract and retain exceptional and diverse educators, ultimately benefiting students and the broader community.

Overall, HCPS's decisions around resource allocations reflect a strategic commitment to meeting the intended outcomes of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future. In the upcoming resource allocation decisions for HCPS, a strategic focus will be placed on reallocating funds to guarantee that at-risk students have access to the necessary support for academic success. Efforts will be intensified to enhance resources for English Language Learners (ELL). Moreover, ensuring the sustainability of post-CCR pathways, workforce investment, and apprenticeships will remain a priority. Through these strategic allocations, HCPS aims to address equity gaps, support diverse learner needs, and prepare all students for success.

D. Challenges & Monitoring

Implementing the Blueprint presents significant challenges, with the top three challenges identified as: **Resource Allocation**; **Meaningful Stakeholder Engagement**; and **Realizing Equitable Outcomes**.

HCPS will continue its commitment to resource stewardship.

The challenge of resource stewardship is two-fold, one is systemically ensuring that funding adequately and effectively follows the student, and the other is alleviating stakeholder concerns and perceptions.

Starting with stakeholder concerns, [Survey Analysis](#) revealed unease among stakeholders about resource allocation. Specifically, respondents highlighted challenges and areas for improvement related to funding, staffing, and accountability within the plan's implementation. One of the primary concerns expressed by stakeholders was whether HCPS would have adequate resources to carry out all aspects of the plan and hold staff and leaders accountable for the proposed changes. The ambitious scope of the Blueprint raised doubts among respondents about the sufficiency of funding, staffing, and physical space to support various initiatives, such as the introduction of new Early Childhood Education (ECE) programming. Furthermore, stakeholders expressed apprehension about teacher compensation, emphasizing its importance in recruiting and retaining high-quality educators. This concern underscored the broader issue of resource allocation within the HCPS.

Although steps have already been taken to ensure funding serves intended students through the HCPS priority school model and new software tools for budgeting, getting to the finish line of meeting the Blueprint allocation requirements will take strategic changes that also honor important and cost-intensive aspects of the Blueprint (like the career ladder, post-college and career readiness pathways), providing supports for all students. HCPS will view this challenge as an opportunity to make structural and significant changes to improve outcomes for students in historically low-performing schools. As such HCPS is looking at models for further differentiated pay for all staff at schools with high concentrations of poverty, shifting coaches and instructional specialists' positions to serve classrooms through co-teaching, working with our local workforce investment board to align workforce investment programs for students' career credentials, building HCPS special education programs to reduce non-public placement, and making strategic adjustments to our services for English Learners.



HCPS will monitor progress for this challenge by:

HCPS has established published targets to meet Maryland Education Article, §5-234 minimum school funding requirements, which will be reported on in the Annual Report starting in 2025. In addition to audits, financial reporting mechanisms, and new analytical budget capabilities, the true measure of success in overcoming this challenge lies in observing tangible improvements in student achievement across schools historically facing lower academic performance. This entails closely monitoring academic indicators such as standardized test scores, graduation rates, and proficiency levels in core subjects. By focusing on these outcomes, HCPS can gauge the effectiveness of its resource allocation strategies and ensure that every student has the opportunity to thrive academically, regardless of their background.

HCPS will continue its commitment to meaningful stakeholder engagement.

Despite concerted efforts and engagement with stakeholders, HCPS faces challenges in achieving meaningful engagement, especially when competing with other demands for the community's attention. Discussing topics that may not directly impact a family's student can be particularly challenging. While having more than 160 committee members is commendable, it represents only a fraction of HCPS's broader community, which includes 38,000 students and 5,500 employees. Methods such as providing newsletters and presentations to diverse groups are valuable but require the time and attention of families, adding to the challenge of meaningful engagement. As HCPS strives for inclusivity and transparency, Blueprint implementation committees will continue to seek innovative ways to capture the interest and involvement of diverse stakeholders, ensuring that all voices are heard and considered in the decision-making process.



Within our [Survey Analysis](#), stakeholders perceive several challenges in engagement within our Blueprint plans. Despite widespread endorsement of the plan's goals and vision, there are concerns about community involvement. Respondents acknowledge the positive impact of current initiatives, such as the Community School model, but emphasize the importance of seeking buy-in from different groups, including diverse families, community and business partners, and staff. As another example, there is excitement about expanding Pre-K programs, but stakeholders feel they lack information about the logistics of implementation.

To tackle this obstacle, each Blueprint committee has been assigned the responsibility of bridging communication gaps within their respective pillars. Take, for instance, the Elevating Educators Committee, where the co-chairs undertook focused efforts to understand teachers' awareness of the Blueprint. Through conducting focus groups, they discovered that National Board Certification was the only aspect consistently understood by teachers as part of the Blueprint. In response, the committee is actively developing a network of teacher ambassadors to effectively disseminate information about all facets of Pillar 2 directly from teachers to their peers. This initiative is an example of the committee's initiatives aimed at enhancing communication and ensuring that all are engaged.

HCPS will monitor progress for this challenge by:

With valuable feedback from the 2023 System-wide survey, this process will be repeated with the 2024 Implementation Plan. Additional questions will include improvement measures for stakeholder engagement. Each pillar has outcomes that can also provide valuable information about effective communications, such as Pre-K enrollment, private provider participation, number of teachers pursuing national board certification, number of students accessing free post-CCR pathways, number of students accessing resources through Community Schools and mental health partners, and through customer service inquiries about the Blueprint to AskHCPS@hcps.org.

HCPS will continue its commitment to equity.

HCPS faces challenges in achieving equity, particularly concerning the Blueprint goals of diversity, recruitment, and retention of teachers, as well as addressing opportunity and achievement gaps among students based on socioeconomics, race, and community.

The district acknowledges the urgent need to diversify its educator workforce to reflect the local community's demographics and provide equal opportunities for all students. A comprehensive [Needs Assessment Report](#) for the years 2022-2023 has been commissioned to identify areas for improvement in cultivating a more diverse teacher candidate pool. Despite nearly 40% of its student population being persons of color, HCPS has seen less than 10% of its teachers being persons of color over the past five years. The report's synthesized findings highlight key action areas, including strengthening talent pathways, developing data-guided recruitment plans focused on diversity, and fully committing to increasing educator diversity as a priority strategy. Additionally related to staff and efforts towards equitable outcomes, HCPS faces challenges in incentivizing teachers to transfer to Blueprint low-performing schools (zero NBCT have transferred to date for the \$7,000 increase), necessitating strategic efforts like supporting NBC cohorts and offering fee support for instructional coaches partnering with teachers in these schools.

Regarding students, while the Blueprint has made strides in reducing opportunity gaps through initiatives like free dual enrollment and community schools, ensuring equitable access to resources remains a challenge. HCPS data shows that although dual enrollment has increased, it primarily benefits students already engaged in higher-level coursework, highlighting the need to reach students who may not have considered such opportunities. Academic data also demonstrates persistent gaps in student achievement across demographics, but we have started seeing growth in schools benefiting from the HCPS priority schools' model.

[Survey Analysis](#) underscores concern about equity, with stakeholders expressing frustration about disparities in student support and the disparate impacts of the Blueprint on various groups. HCPS is committed to addressing these challenges through targeted efforts to support all students and educators and to ensure that the Blueprint's initiatives benefit everyone equitably.

HCPS will monitor progress for this challenge by:

For diversity of staff, to monitor progress HCPS has established a set of key data points for continuous evaluation. HCPS is tracking the increase in the percentage of teachers of color to better reflect the student population diversity, aiming to positively impact student outcomes. Additionally, the district is monitoring the percentage of conditionally certified teachers who successfully obtain their standard professional certificate, as our conditional teachers often represent the most diversity in our staff.

For student equity, HCPS is conducting thorough data analysis to identify areas where certain student populations may not be benefiting from expanded Blueprint opportunities and is implementing targeted outreach strategies. Similar to the challenge of resource allocation, the true measure of success in overcoming this equity challenge lies in observing tangible improvements in student achievement data across schools with historically lower academic performance. HCPS is committed to reducing achievement gaps across all [unique school designation](#) categories in reading and math, aligning with or exceeding state and county averages. By continuously monitoring these key data points and making data-driven decisions, HCPS aims to effectively address equity gaps and ensure sustainable, equitable outcomes for all students.



Reference: [Advancing the Strategic Plan](#); [HCPS Annual Report](#).

PILLAR 1

I. Access to High-Quality, Full-Day Pre-K

Initial Blueprint Implementation Plan Reference: Questions 1 - 5, 11 - 16

In March 2023, the LEA described how it would **increase access to high-quality, full-day Pre-K** for Tier 1 and 2 students, including students with disabilities, students experiencing homelessness, and English learners. Responses discussed considerations related to facilities, including expansion to new facilities, transformation of existing facilities, opportunities for shared spaces with private providers, strategic communication and outreach, and the development of a common and unified enrollment system to support racially and socioeconomically diverse learning environments. Based on implementation of the LEA's plans over the last year, discuss the district's progress in transforming its systems and practices and achieving the intended outcomes of the Blueprint. Responses must address the following questions.

- What progress has been made in implementation related to both planned activities and anticipated outcomes? If progress has been limited, what challenges has the LEA encountered? Consider, identify, and refer to available data as needed to demonstrate progress.
- How is the LEA adapting its plans to mitigate challenges and/or ensure continued progress and future success? Which strategies are not working that the LEA will no longer implement, and which new strategies does the LEA intend to implement? Include the rationale for adjustments.
- **Required Data Analysis:** Through an analysis of data, discuss progress towards meeting the Blueprint Outcome to serve all Tier 1 4-year-old children who wish to enroll in Pre-K by SY 2025-2026.

Criteria for Success

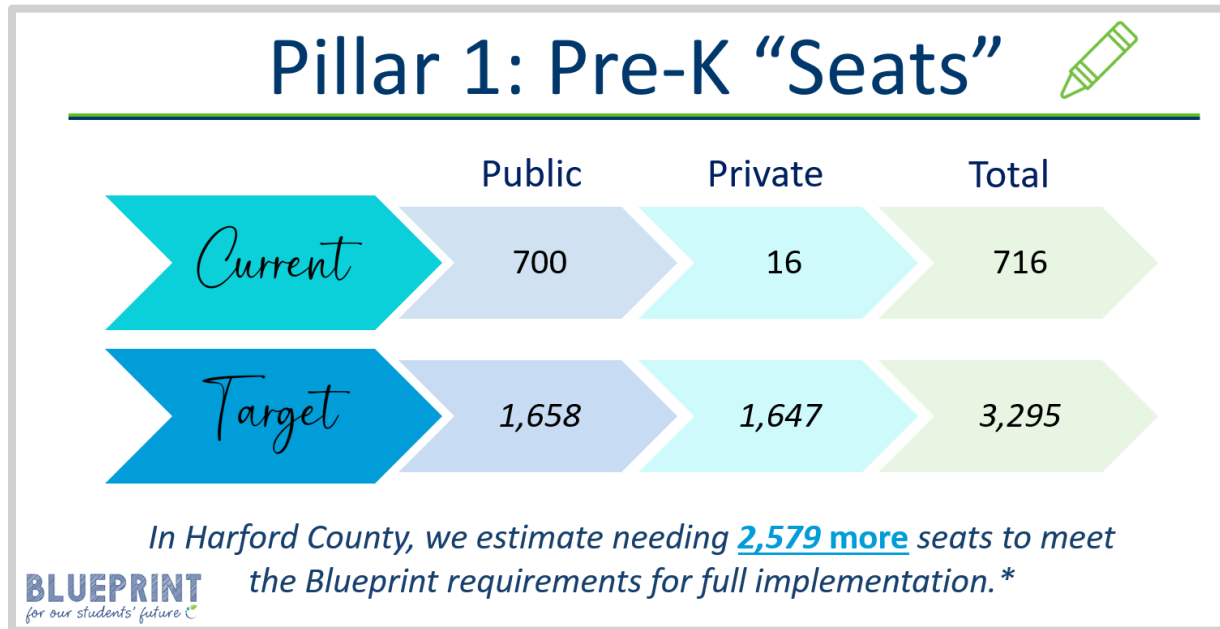
- Identifies highest priority areas and/or strategies discussed in the March 2023 submission and provides detailed updates related to progress, including identifying challenges where progress has been limited.
- Identifies and provides the rationale for new/revised strategies, activities, and/or outcomes that have been developed or revised since the 2023 submission.
- Discusses how specific feedback provided for the 2023 submission has been addressed if applicable.
- Analyzes public and private Pre-K enrollment data.
- Includes data projections demonstrating increased access and enrollment of Tier 1 4-year-old children in Pre-K by Blueprint deadline of SY 2025-2026.

HCPS is committed to a mixed delivery system for Pre-K expansion.

Tier 1 and Tier 2 Expansion Update: Expansion Update: The Early Childhood Office and Blueprint sub-committee are actively working to expand high-quality Pre-K programs in Harford County. This involves reviewing HCPS' expansion plans, identifying barriers for both HCPS and private providers, and establishing partnerships to increase Pre-K seats. HCPS currently offers 16 full-day sites out of 33 elementary schools and is collaborating with family providers and community organizations to add more seats. We are currently partnering with two family providers to serve Tier 1 and Tier 2 students through Aspire Family Childcare Alliance of Maryland to provide 16 seats. All applications for Tier 1 and Tier 2 students have been accepted. HCPS will continue to collaborate with providers to identify seats and support the programs in accreditation, EXCELS Level 5, and Maryland Blueprint deliverables.

By SY 25-26 all current HCPS half-day Pre-K programs at the following schools will host full-day Pre-K pending MSDE Pre-Kindergarten Expansion Grant approval: Abingdon Elementary, Bel Air Elementary, Church Creek Elementary, Edgewood Elementary, Homestead Elementary and Prospect Mill Elementary. HCPS will increase the number of full-day enrolled students through this expansion and family

recruitment via school web platforms, county and school social media, fliers in the community and yard signs at every elementary school and catchment neighborhood. The primary challenge faced by HCPS is the shortage of physical space. With 33 elementary schools and a student capacity of 19,513, the 2023 enrollment was 17,756 (91% capacity), with projections showing an increase to 18,419 students (94% capacity) over the next seven years. Innovative solutions and collaboration are essential to overcome these challenges and ensure the success of the expansion initiative. **References:** [HCPS Early Childhood Blueprint overview SY 23-24](#); [HCPS Enrollment 2018-2024](#); [Pre-K Enrollment Projection Tables](#)



Facility Plan Update: HCPS has a two-year plan to transition all half-day Pre-K programs to full day by 2025-2026. The Early Childhood Office worked with Facilities to assess space in each elementary school. Five of eleven half-day programs have already become full day without reducing student numbers, doubling classroom spaces. Three more programs will expand in 2024-2025, and the final three by 2025-2026. Initial funding comes from the FY 2024 local Capital Improvement Programs (CIP). Projects include adding bathrooms, modifying playgrounds, and using temporary learning cottages (portable classrooms). Schools facing space challenges are evaluating adjacent sites for expansion. In the 2023-2024 school year, there were 35 full-day classrooms, 6 half-day classrooms, 6 Learning Together preschool classes, 6 Early Learners preschool classes, and 2 private family Blueprint Pre-K Providers with 8 seats each. In SY 23-24, North Bend, Dublin, Meadowvale, and Havre De Grace transitioned to full-day Pre-K. Six schools can accommodate extra space, two need building modifications, two require learning cottages, and one cannot accommodate due to site restrictions.

NEW In our updated efforts to increase expansion a joint delegation consisting of representatives from Facilities, executive leadership, the Special Education department, and the Early Childhood Coordinator, visited Washington County to explore a transitional program and full-day Pre-K programs housed in a high school. The site visit aimed to evaluate the feasibility and potential applicability of such models to our county. We have the upcoming opportunity to present a strategic plan to executive leadership and the Board of Education. Drawing inspiration from the model observed in Washington County, our proposal aims to address key areas for improvement and identify new potential locations for high school expansion. We are currently engaging in productive discussions around building space, scheduling, transportation security, special areas, and administrative oversight for the proposed high school full-day Pre-Kindergarten program that will enhance and facilitate the execution of this initiative.

The plan to increase elementary school capacity continues, but relocating Harford Academy for Pre-K has been postponed. Consequently, the execution of the Pre-Kindergarten expansion at this new site will be

deferred a few more years due to securing a new site, planning and preparation. Launching a full-day Pre-K program in a high school is planned for SY 2025-2026, with further expansion in SY 2026-2027. This expansion is a strategic move to provide additional full-day Pre-K programs to a larger demographic of students seeking quality Pre-Kindergarten education. Transitioning the remaining six half-day programs to full day is targeted for 2025-2026. HCPS seeks funding for a scope study to address systemic needs, planned for FY 2025 CIP. However, constrained capital funding implies that adding permanent capacity for program expansion might postpone essential systemic and replacement projects. ***NEW*** In April, a collaborative team created a 10-year pre-K expansion plan. In the next graphic, HCPS has calculated costs of expansion if private providers do not opt to participate in the Blueprint.

References: [Blueprint Pre-K Capital Planning 2024](#); [Pre-K Expansion Capital Strategies by School](#); [Educational Facilities Master Plan 2023](#); [High School Pre-K Expansion Proposal](#); [Blueprint Capital Cost Estimate as of 2023](#)

Pillar 1: Expansion Costs

*If private providers are unable to join Blueprint Pre-K expansion in Harford County, we estimate the need for a total of **121 new classrooms**, with estimated costs as follows:*

<p><i>Construction</i></p> <div style="background-color: #0070C0; color: white; padding: 5px; font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em;">\$122,216,761</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Classroom = 1,000 sq, including a restroom. +30% support space (office, planning, storage). Construction cost based on State average est. as of July 2024 Does not include adding capacity to parking lots, cafeterias, unified arts, bathrooms, etc. Playgrounds are not included. Additions may not be possible on all sites. Additions may impact construction codes requiring upgrades to the existing facility 	or	<p><i>Portables</i></p> <div style="background-color: #00A69A; color: white; padding: 5px; font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em;">\$52,060,475</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standard portable w/o bathroom (intermediate grades) Does not include facility modification in addition to portables (ex. adding bathrooms for the PreK, or impact on code requirements). Temporary solution & does not add capacity to the building (parking lots, cafeterias, unified arts, bathrooms, etc.). If more than 5,000 sq. ft. of impervious is added to a site, the County requires Stormwater management upgrades. Playgrounds are not included. Portables may not be possible on all sites.
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Implementation Challenges Update: HCPS continues to address all challenges to increase access to high-quality, full-day Pre-K. Below is a list of additional challenges and strategies:

Barrier	Strategy
Capital funding for building modifications.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HCPS will consider ways to add capacity with renovations or redistricting. HCPS will advocate for funding through operational funds or grant funding for building modifications. HCPS will continue to collaborate closely with local childcare providers to accommodate additional Pre-K seats. <p style="font-size: 0.9em; margin-top: 10px;">References: Blueprint Pre-K Capital Planning 2024; Pre-K Expansion Capital Strategies by School; Educational Facilities Master Plan 2023; High School Pre-K Expansion Proposal; Blueprint Capital Cost Estimate as of 2023</p>
Ensure bus transportation is available for Pre-K students (specialized and general transportation).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HCPS Office of Early Childhood will continue to evaluate bus capacity with the Office of Transportation and will advocate for operational funds or apply for other MSDE grant funding to purchase new buses to accommodate additional capacity needs. (\$70,000 per bus).

Barrier	Strategy
<p>Abingdon & Bel Air Elem. schools' half-day Pre-K program will expand to full day. However, space is limited to one classroom. HCPS must reduce seats to 20 at each location versus the 40 seats currently served in the half-day program.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • *NEW* HCPS envisions expanding our impact by incorporating additional high school sites into during the SY 2026-2027. • HCPS will continue to assess the existing space and identify requirements in each of our elementary schools for accommodating Pre-K programs. • HCPS will continue to collaborate closely with local childcare providers to partner on a mixed delivery system to accommodate additional Pre-K seats. • HCPS will consider ways to add capacity with renovations or redistricting. • HCPS will advocate for funding through operational funds or grant funding for building modifications.
<p>Secure funding to maintain Early Childhood Teacher Specialist, and obtain additional Pre-Kindergarten teachers, Pre-Kindergarten assistants, special area teachers and special educators.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HCPS will continue to recruit qualified early childhood teachers (general educators and special educators) in partnership with Human Resources. • HCPS will continue to provide professional development, and supportive coaching for special area staff on developmentally appropriate practices. • HCPS will continue to provide new teacher orientation professional development and supportive coaching to all staff and providers in implementing developmentally appropriate practices and evidence-based practices to support social/emotional/behavioral growth.
<p>Hire additional highly qualified Pre-Kindergarten teachers, Pre-Kindergarten assistants, special area teachers and special educators to support HCPS Pre-K and community programs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HCPS will continue to seek out and recruit qualified early childhood teachers (general educators and special educators) to hire utilizing all Human Resources recruitment strategies. • HCPS will continue to provide professional development, and supportive coaching for special area staff to support developmentally appropriate practices for Pre-K students. • HCPS will continue to provide new teacher orientation, professional development, and supportive coaching to all staff and private providers in implementing developmentally appropriate practices and evidence-based practices to support social/emotional/behavioral growth.
<p>Recruiting Tier 1 and Tier 2 families to enroll with private providers depending on the community in which the provider is located.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HCPS will support joint recruitment with private providers to publicize Pre-Kindergarten options for all families in Harford County by utilizing the HCPS and school web platforms, school and county social media, fliers and yard signs in the community noting all available Pre-K programs. • HCPS Office of Early Childhood will host parent sessions for Pre-K applications at provider locations and school locations across the county between April and May annually. • HCPS has a comprehensive improvement plan aimed at effectively communicating information to families. We have enhanced the user-friendliness of the Early Childhood Section on the HCPS Website and included full-day Pre-Kindergarten information. Simultaneously, our team is diligently working on the development of an online application system, slated for internal pilot testing in the Spring of 2024. HCPS will implement a mixed delivery online application platform for internal and external use by spring of 2025.
<p>Providing available seats for 3-year-olds.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HCPS will continue to collaborate with our community partners to make more available seats for eligible 3-year-olds.
<p>Transportation is not provided for children without IEPs attending Pre-K outside their attendance area. This limitation may discourage some families from enrolling, particularly those unable to transport their children.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HCPS Office of Early Childhood will advocate for operational funds or apply for other MSDE grant funding to purchase new buses to accommodate additional capacity needs. • HCPS will place families without transportation in their catchment area or accommodate a specific site Pre-K requested by the family.

Barrier	Strategy
Identifying providers that are willing to partner in the Blueprint Pre-K mixed delivery system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HCPS Office of Early Childhood attends monthly meetings with the Harford County Childcare Directors Association and shares information regarding partnerships, Pre-K expansion and Maryland Blueprint. • The Harford County Director's Association is hosting a provider from A World of Friends in Baltimore City. The goal will be to share ideas and experience, answer questions, discuss the benefits and supports through partnership. • HCPS Office of Early Childhood will continue to meet with individual providers to discuss the benefits and supports that can be provided with accreditation, EXCELS Level 5, CDA, professional development, coaching, shared resources, shared Pre-K application, and student eligibility identification. During the SY 2023 2024, the Office of Early Childhood has met individually with the following providers to discuss benefits and support that can be offered; Trinity Lutheran School, Harford Community College Childcare, The Highlands School, and Angels of Mine Childcare Center. • During the 2022-2023 school year, a provider from the HCPS Early Childhood Blueprint Committee created a survey for all Harford County providers to provide feedback on the barriers of partnering in the Blueprint Pre-K mixed delivery system. HCPS Early Childhood Blueprint Committee is collaborating and working with providers to advocate with MSDE regarding the identified barriers of teacher certification, delayed paperwork from MSDE, hiring crisis and licensing inconsistencies. HCPS Blueprint Team and Early Childhood Office will provide individualized direct aid for each provider regarding completing accreditation, EXCELS, and professional development for CDA hours.
Ensure access to the new online application platform for pilot school Pre-K families.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HCPS Office of Early Childhood staff will support families through the online application process at pilot schools and designated Harford County Public Libraries sites during the Spring/Summer 2024. • HCPS will ensure the online application will be accessible in English and translated to other languages to support ELL families. • English Learner professionals will assist families in completing the Pre-K application if needed.

Students with Disabilities Update: As of January 2024, HCPS serves 571 preschool children with disabilities and 494 children in the Infants and Toddlers program. 378 children with disabilities attend early childhood education programs, including community childcare, Head Start, and public Pre-K. HCPS met the state target, with 67.68% of special education children in regular early childhood programs. 86 children with IEPs are in full-day Pre-K. HCPS no longer faces corrective action for indicator 6A. However, providing openings for children with disabilities in their home school Pre-K program remains challenging, especially after September 30th each year. Collaboration between the Coordinator of Special Education and Coordinator of Early Childhood helps address this issue, but some children face long bus rides due to seat shortages. HCPS ensures services for children with disabilities through close collaboration between Special Education and Early Childhood departments. Pre-K students are screened by speech and language pathologists, and evaluations are conducted when needed. HCPS also works with Head Start and community providers to support children's development. The Infants and Toddlers program offers coaching support for families and childcare providers, with the Steppingstones program preparing children on extended IFSPs for preschool. HCPS aims to expand access to preschool and learner readiness opportunities through collaborations with community providers and Child Find referrals. HCPS provides direct services and Pyramid Model coaching support to children with IEPs in community preschool programs. Training sessions are offered for providers, but scheduling challenges persist due to limited time and resources. **References:** [Annual Data Indicator Report Card](#); [ECAC Birth to 5 Supports](#); [Private Providers - HCPS Birth to Five Supports](#); [HCPS HeadStart MOU](#)

Strategy	Update
Expand the Community Support Special Education Team – increase special educators from 2.0 to 4.0; increase speech and language pathologists from 2.0 to 4.0; add 1.0 Pyramid Model Coach designated for community support (coaching support and pre referrals). Add at least 1.0 Registered Behavior Technician to support community for behavior.	HCPS’s operating budget was not fully funded for the 23-24 school year and the Blueprint funding was not sufficient to fund these positions.
Provide training and support in the Pyramid Model for community preschool programs and Head Start to ensure providers have the tools and supports needed to effectively implement evidence-based practices to support children’s social/emotional/behavioral development.	HCPS offered Pyramid Model training on August 6, 7, 8, 2023 with 19 participants (16 teachers and 3 paras). HCPS collaborated with University of Maryland and Head Start to conduct Pyramid Model Training for 70 Head Start providers on August 14, 15, 16, 2023. HCPS also provided Pyramid Model Training on February 13, 20 and 27th and March 6, 13 and 20. Community Providers are invited to the Pyramid Model Trainings. HCPS is also collaborating with Abilities Network to provide stipends to community providers who attend the sessions. HCPS is also planning to develop training for all staff on how to adapt learning experiences and materials to meaningfully include children with disabilities in general education classrooms.
Provide sufficient staffing in general Pre-K programs to implement IEPs (Assign at least 1.0 Pre-K/K special educator and 1.0 Pre-K special education paraeducator) to each school with a general Pre-K program.	For the 2023-2024 school year, HCPS added an additional Pre-K/K special educator for a total of 7 dedicated Pre-K/Kindergarten special educators. After the start of the school year, additional paraeducators were added to three Pre-Kindergarten programs to increase the staff to student ratios to 3 adults for 20 children to meet the diverse needs of children. The Department of Special Education and Department of Early Childhood are advocating to follow the staff student ratios outlined in the Caring for Our Children: National Health and Safety Performance Standards Guidelines for Early Care and Education Program (one teacher and two paraeducators for each Pre-Kindergarten class).
HCPS Office of Special Education will continue to offer training and technical assistance during and after hours for community providers on the referral process and evidence-based practices for supporting children with disabilities.	On March 3, 2023, training of developmental milestones, referral process and evidence-based practices were shared at the Childcare Director’s meeting. On December 18, 2023, training regarding the referral process and evidence-based practices was provided to community providers at the Early Childhood Advisory Council Meeting. Pyramid Model training in February and March 2024 was offered to community providers.

Students Experiencing Homelessness Update: The significant increase in HCPS students experiencing homelessness, including Pre-K students, underscores the urgency of the McKinney-Vento Education Program. Objectives include identifying and addressing challenges faced by homeless students and families through collaboration between HCPS and community partners. An MOU is in place to improve identification processes, expand services, and support housing stabilization. The program aims to enhance academic progress by improving attendance, grades, and access to intervention programs for homeless students. Student Support Services, in partnership with the Title I Office and community partners, have established a local collaborative to increase awareness and provide resources for homeless students and families. HCPS staff will continue building partnerships with community leaders and policymakers to support homeless students. Collaborative efforts involve interagency agreements, joint events, and regular communication channels to facilitate referrals and provide resources. The McKinney-Vento Education program ensures younger siblings are referred to available programs and connects families with community services for stability and smooth transitions, contributing to students' well-being and academic success. [Reference: HCPS Homeless MOA](#)

ELL, Racial Diversity, and Socioeconomic recruitment through Strategic Communication and Outreach Update: The HCPS Early Childhood Coordinator conducts a Spring meeting for elementary secretaries and providers to ensure consistent Pre-K application procedures countywide. Recruitment efforts use HCPS and school web platforms, social media, public libraries, flyers, and yard signs. Committees like the Judy Center Steering Committee and the Early Childhood Advisory Council aid recruitment through collaboration with local health agencies, social services organizations, and other community entities. Schools and the Office of Early Childhood provide information to local childcare programs and the Childcare Directors Association through meetings, flyers, and online resources. The goal is to create socioeconomically and racially diverse learning environments, promoting inclusivity and equity. The Pre-K application process prioritizes linguistic needs, offering accessibility in Spanish and other languages as needed. Families specify their primary language and the child's language proficiency. Language professionals assist families when needed, and HCPS collaborates with private providers to support EL students individually. Access to EL services and screenings is ensured through HCPS or in partnership with LASOS. Private provider staff may attend HCPS professional development for EL support. All Tier 1 ELL students have been accepted into Pre-K programs for the 23-24 school year.
Reference: [HCPS Parent Engagement Survey English & Spanish](#)

NEW for the Spring of 2024, Pre-K teacher specialists and Judy Center staff established assistance sites at the following Harford County Public Library locations to provide support and guidance to families on the Pre-K application process.

Application Process Update: The HCPS full-day Pre-K application and eligibility process is included in the Pre-Kindergarten Handbook for teacher reference and shared with families on the HCPS website. Pre-K applications open on the first Friday in May and remain open year-round. Families can choose a public or private site that suits their needs. Applications undergo review in June and early August, with enrollment notifications sent over the summer. HCPS is enhancing communication through a user-friendly website and developing an online application system for internal pilot testing in Spring 2024. HCPS ensures access for economically disadvantaged, EL, and students with disabilities through a designated application process, including translations for EL families. Applications undergo a standardized review process, considering factors like family income, race, disability, and EL status to maximize diversity. Information about Pre-K is shared by Infants and Toddlers and Child Find teams during IEP meetings and parent trainings. Families provide general information and proof of income, reviewed based on Federal Poverty Level for Tier 1 and 2 students. All families, including transfers within HCPS, must complete an application, with Tier 1 transfers verified by Pre-K teachers. **Reference:** [Full-Day Pre-K Application Timeline](#); [Pre-K Registration](#)

Pre-K applications will be reviewed using a common review sheet, including student details such as name, date of birth, family size, income, race, disability, and EL status. Applications will be sorted by school and county personnel to ensure diversity across socioeconomic, racial, EL, ethnic, and disability categories. This process aims to place students in programs that maximize diversity based on applicants for each school year.

Online Application Platform Update: An ongoing initiative is underway to develop an online Pre-K enrollment application portal. Since winter 2023, the development team has met frequently to create this platform, considering key aspects of the Pre-K application process. Testing, bug fixing, and change requests are scheduled to ensure the online application is operational for internal pilot use at 3 elementary schools with Judy Centers by spring 2024 and for both internal and provider use by spring 2025. **Reference:** [Pre-K Online Application Development Timeline](#)



II. High-Quality, Mixed-Delivery (Public & Private) Pre-K System

Initial Blueprint Implementation Plan Reference: Questions 6 – 10, and 18

In March 2023, the LEA described how it would collaborate with private providers to implement a mixed-delivery Pre-K system and ensure every student has access to a high-quality Pre-K program. Responses included considerations for increasing access as discussed in the previous question as well as sharing data and information, providing comprehensive services, and leveraging shared resources. Based on implementation of the LEA's plans over the last year, discuss the district's progress in transforming its systems and practices and achieving the intended outcomes of the Blueprint. Responses must address the following questions.

- What progress has been made in implementation related to both planned activities and anticipated outcomes? If progress has been limited, what challenges has the LEA encountered? Consider, identify, and refer to available data as needed to demonstrate progress.
- How is the LEA adapting its plans to mitigate challenges and/or ensure continued progress and future success? Which strategies are not working that the LEA will no longer implement, and which new strategies does the LEA intend to implement? Include the rationale for adjustments.

Criteria for Success

- Identifies highest priority areas and/or strategies discussed in the March 2023 submission and provides detailed updates related to progress, including identifying challenges where progress has been limited.
- Identifies and provides the rationale for new/revised strategies, activities, and/or outcomes that have been developed or revised since the 2023 submission.
- Discusses how specific feedback provided for the 2023 submission has been addressed if applicable.
- Describes how the LEA collaborates with private providers to develop and implement a mixed-delivery system.

HCPS is committed to a mixed delivery system for Pre-K expansion.

HCPS currently offers several Pre-Kindergarten programs partnering in a mixed delivery with two Family Childcare Alliance Pre-K Providers. HCPS utilizes multiple strategies to meet the targets for the distribution of public and private Pre-K slots. The following are steps HCPS is currently taking to meet the Blueprint target.

Collaborative Partnerships: HCPS leverages partnerships extensively to expand Pre-K through private providers.

- **Participation in Collaborative Meetings:** The HCPS Office of Early Childhood actively engages in monthly/quarterly Collaborative Meetings with Early Childhood partners, including the Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC), Judy Center Steering Committee, and others, to implement a mixed-delivery Pre-K system and ensure access to high-quality programs.
- **Harford Childcare Directors Association Meetings:** HCPS participates in monthly meetings to connect with directors, address current needs, and share insights on the Blueprint program.
- **Ongoing Communication:** The Office of Early Childhood contacts providers quarterly via email and phone calls to offer support, resources, and partnerships.
- **Recruitment Efforts:** HCPS actively recruits Blueprint partners by meeting with individual providers and presenting at the Childcare Directors Meeting.
- **Outreach Initiatives:** The Office of Early Childhood disseminates information to private providers through presentations and maintains open channels of communication to facilitate information exchange.
- **Information Sharing:** HCPS informs providers about MSDE changes, regulations, policies, and available community resources to support compliance and improve services.

- **Collaboration for Resource Optimization:** HCPS collaborates with private providers to address shared challenges and optimize resources, including addressing space limitations.
- **Blueprint Sub-Committee:** The Early Childhood Blueprint sub-committee promotes a mixed delivery system, reviews expansion plans, identifies barriers, and explores partnerships to engage all families in Harford County.

Articulation Meetings: HCPS conducts articulation meetings each spring with Pre-Kindergarten providers to foster communication, coordination, and alignment of educational goals for a seamless transition to public kindergarten. [Reference: Articulation Documents](#)

Kindergarten Readiness Presentations: A Teacher Specialist visits private providers to present information on kindergarten readiness, facilitating a smooth transition for children. Providers include Celebree Learning Centers, Goddard Learning Centers, HCC Childcare, Grace Nursery School, and Christ Our King Nursery School. [Reference: Kindergarten Readiness Workshop Flyer](#)

Mitigating Challenges: Utilizing feedback from the 2023 provider survey (detailed in the 2023 Blueprint Plan), the HCPS Office of Early Childhood and HCPS Early Childhood Blueprint Committee are collaboratively implementing strategies to address and overcome challenges for the successful implementation of the Blueprint Pre-K mixed delivery system. See provider survey for challenges indicated. [Reference: Childcare Directors Blueprint Survey](#)

NEW for the 2023-2024 the Blueprint Early Childhood Committee has been committed to finding common ground with private providers and working to find shared problem-solving opportunities. Areas of shared work have included unpacking CDA requirements and barriers, legislation discussion, and ideas for incentivizing private providers.

Strategies to Support Private Providers: To support providers based on survey results, the HCPS Office of Early Childhood implements several strategies. They maintain open communication with providers, emphasizing the benefits of achieving EXCELS Level 5 and offering technical assistance on room environment, partnerships, and program operations. Targeted training sessions and professional development opportunities address individual provider needs, focusing on enhancing practices and meeting higher EXCELS rating criteria. Additionally, the office utilizes grant funds to procure materials focused on social-emotional development. Engagement efforts involve productive discussions with providers interested in joining the Maryland Blueprint initiative.

Financial support and outreach efforts include employing teacher specialists and expanding the team through the Pre-K expansion grant. The goal is to sustain financial support for all specialists using allocated Blueprint funding. KRA grant funding provides support for CDA coursework or towards an AA degree for HCPS eligible staff and private providers.

The HCPS Office of Early Childhood has effectively disseminated vital information to providers regarding special education, related services, and English Language (EL) services. This includes comprehensive presentations by the Special Education Coordinator for Birth to Five and the Grant Teacher Specialist for Parent Involvement, delivered to both the ECAC committee and several HCPS Title 1 Schools. HCPS is dedicated to collaborating with private providers to enhance coordination in various areas, including grading and reporting, assessments, and system communication. Partner providers receive inclusive email communications and are encouraged to participate in Pre-K professional development opportunities. Annual articulation sessions are scheduled for transitioning students, and providers are welcome to attend IEP meetings with parental consent. The Community Support Team, comprised of special educators, paraeducators, speech and language pathologists, and therapists, offers direct services to students and coaching support to community teachers. This team also collaborates with private preschools, providing tailored professional development based on specific needs. HCPS collaborates with various organizations to enhance the Early Childhood Resource Page on the HCPS website, offering valuable resources for families and providers.

The Department of Special Education collaborates with ECAC and the Department of Early Childhood to provide information to community providers on the referral process for Infants and Toddlers and preschool

special education. Plans for an integrated secure data collection system for children attending community preschool programs are underway, aiming to enhance interventions and transitions to kindergarten.

HCPS has initiated a work group to assess the scope and capabilities for developing a centralized online enrollment system accessible to all families. HCPS participates in the initiatives outlined in Maryland Rebuilds, Find-a-Program Pre-K Enrollment System. The objective of establishing a seamless Pre-K enrollment model aligns closely with HCPS goals of fostering increased community engagement in Maryland's Blueprint Pre-K expansion priorities. After completing an internal review and rigorous testing, our next step is to gather input from the Blueprint Committee, Director Committee, and other stakeholders to explore the inclusion of private providers.

The partnership with Private providers extends support to providers in various ways with Inclusive Professional Development with Flexible Learning Options:

- The HCPS Early Childhood team actively involves private providers in all Pre-K professional development opportunities held throughout each school year. The topics covered include a detailed exploration of Maryland State Accreditation processes, developmentally appropriate practices, and strategies for promoting school readiness.
- HCPS provides virtual and recorded professional development sessions. This approach allows providers the flexibility to access crucial training at their convenience, ensuring they can actively participate in professional development without disrupting their busy schedules.
- HCPS Early Childhood Teacher Specialists are available to offer individualized professional learning opportunities to providers tailored to address specific needs identified by the providers. Teacher Specialist have been supporting several private providers in this manner such as Harford Community College Childcare Center, Goddard, Trinity Lutheran, Grace Cooperative Learning Center, and Forest Hill Nature Childcare.
- HCPS Office of Early Childhood provides evening professional learning sessions for core knowledge hours.
- Additionally, we maintain an ongoing presence in forums such as ECAC and Directors Association meetings, actively connecting with private providers.
- Furthermore, we conduct individualized sessions with private providers at their convenience, explaining the nuances of high-quality Pre-K standards and Blueprint requirements to ensure comprehensive understanding and alignment.
- The community support special educators (2.0 FTEs) have provided coaching and support to daycare and preschool providers at multiple daycare/preschool centers (e.g., Child Time, Salem Lutheran, Primrose, Churchville Presbyterian).
- HCPS currently has 12 trained Pyramid Model coaches supporting community and public Pre-Kindergarten programs. We also have 1 Infants and Toddlers Pyramid Model coach who supports providers servicing homes and daycare/preschools.



Reference: [Sample Parent and Provider Communication Workshops and Resources](#); [Sample Pyramid Model Training](#); [Pre-K Online Application Development Timeline](#)

Comprehensive Services and Screening: HCPS collaborates with private providers to ensure that Pre-K families have access to a comprehensive range of services, either directly through HCPS or in coordination with local health and social services departments. Offerings include screenings for vision, hearing, dental health, speech and language, English Language (EL) support, social/emotional development using the Pyramid Model, early intervention, and physical development. The Coordinator of Special Education- Birth to 5 works with the Early Childhood Coordinator to provide specialized instruction for children with disabilities in both public and private preschool placements. The Child Find and Community Support Team offers consultation and support for children, including observation and strategy development. The PLUSS (Preschoolers Learning and Using Social Skills) group provides Tier 2 support for children with social/emotional/behavioral difficulties. Screenings are available through Child Find for all children, and a comprehensive evaluation process is conducted as needed based on IEP team decisions. HCPS also collaborates with Head Start to screen participating children. If a child requires

special education services, an IEP is developed with parents and providers. The Birth to 5 Special Education Teacher Specialist and Community Support Team provides support and consultation to both public and private Pre-K programs, assisting with identifying support and accommodations. Additionally, HCPS collaborates with the Department of Health to expand mental health services for families and children aged from birth to 5. **References:** [Annual Data Indicator Report Card](#); [ECAC Birth to 5 Supports](#); [Private Providers - HCPS Birth to Five Supports](#); [HCPS HeadStart MOU](#); [HCPS Homeless MOA](#); [HCPS Early Childhood Online Resources](#)

III. Workforce Development & Pipeline for High Quality Pre-K Staff

Initial Blueprint Implementation Plan Reference: Questions 19-22

In March 2023, the LEA described its plan to develop its workforce and build pipelines for teachers and teacher assistants that meet the high-quality requirements. Responses addressed providing professional development related to the instructional program and high-quality instructional materials discussed in Pillar 3, using a diverse set of strategies to build the Pre-K teacher and teacher assistant pipelines, supporting teachers and teacher assistants in meeting the credentialing requirements set forth by the Blueprint by the beginning of SY 2027-2028, and communicating opportunities to current and prospective employees. Based on implementation of the LEA's plans over the last year, discuss the district's progress in transforming its systems and practices and achieving the intended outcomes of the Blueprint. Responses must address the following questions.

- What progress has been made in implementation related to both planned activities and anticipated outcomes? If progress has been limited, what challenges has the LEA encountered? Consider, identify, and refer to available data as needed to demonstrate progress.
- How is the LEA adapting its plans to mitigate challenges and/or ensure continued progress and future success? Which strategies are not working that the LEA will no longer implement, and which new strategies does the LEA intend to implement? Include the rationale for adjustments.
- **Required Data Analysis:** Through an analysis of data, discuss progress towards meeting the Blueprint Outcome of Pre-K teachers and teacher assistants meeting high-quality requirements.

Criteria for Success

- Identifies highest priority areas and/or strategies discussed in the March 2023 submission and provides detailed updates related to progress, including identifying challenges where progress has been limited
- Identifies and provides the rationale for new/revised strategies, activities, and/or outcomes that have been developed or revised since the 2023 submission
- Discusses how specific feedback provided for the 2023 submission has been addressed if applicable
- Analyzes and uses quantitative data (e.g., staffing data) to demonstrate progress towards pipelines meeting hiring and workforce development needs in alignment with the high-quality standards under the Blueprint (Education Article 7-1 A-04)

HCPS is committed to the development & recruitment of high-quality educators.

HCPS is committed to ensuring high quality Pre-Kindergarten teachers and Pre-Kindergarten support staff. This commitment involves scrutinizing hiring data, identifying trends and needs, establishing partnerships with higher education institutions, implementing grow-your-own programs, fostering diverse environments, delivering job-embedded professional development, and appointing teacher specialists to provide guidance and practical training. The paramount importance of recruiting and retaining qualified teachers and paraeducators cannot be overstated, especially in the context of high-quality Pre-Kindergarten programming. By integrating the following strategies and maintaining a focus on attracting and keeping highly qualified personnel, we anticipate sustained progress and success in our initiatives for

high-quality Pre-K programming. Overall, HCPS is making progress to develop its workforce and build pipelines for teachers and teacher assistants that meet the high-quality requirements.

Early Childhood Teacher Specialists: With the support of the Pre-K expansion grant and operating funds, HCPS now has 3 eleven-month Early Childhood Teacher Specialists and 1 ten-month Early Childhood Teacher Specialist that provide specialized job embedded professional learning and classroom supports for Pre-K teachers, paraeducators (classroom assistants), and private providers through planning, modeling lessons, coteaching, collecting and analyzing student data, and supporting developmentally appropriate environments. HCPS continues to offer separate evening professional learning opportunities in which providers may attend and receive core knowledge hours. Topics included are the Importance of Literacy in early Childhood, Purposeful Play, Universal Supports for Early Learners, School Readiness, Disability Identification, and Supporting Diverse Needs of all Young Learners. The community providers are also invited to participate in Pyramid Model (Social Emotional Foundations for Early Learners) certificate training offered after hours.



Professional Development and High-Quality Instructional Materials: The HCPS Office of Early Childhood oversees professional development for Pre-K teachers, paraeducators, and private providers, collaborating with school administrators and private providers for tailored training. Administrators and providers are invited to all early childhood professional development opportunities, some of which are available virtually to accommodate time constraints. Throughout each school year, teachers and assistants receive ongoing training on various topics, including assessment, play-based learning, developmental practices, Kindergarten Readiness Assessment, and thematic units. Weekly collaborative planning supports program quality and MSDE accreditation. New Pre-K teachers and those new to grade level receive intensive professional development before each school year, including observation opportunities with master teachers. Professional development is guided by parent surveys, accreditation self-appraisals, teacher requests, and district initiatives, with ongoing monitoring through teacher feedback and classroom observations. [Reference: Early Childhood PD 23-24; Science of Reading PD](#)

Recruitment: Job postings for Early Childhood positions are shared on various platforms, including the HCPS website, social media channels, and job boards like Indeed and SchoolSpring. Additionally, teacher-specific postings are listed on college job boards hosted by Handshake. Diversity in Ed platforms are utilized to attract a diverse pool of candidates. HCPS employs 57 Pre-Kindergarten paraeducators and 42 Pre-Kindergarten teachers, with plans to expand staff to support additional programs. While all current Pre-Kindergarten staff positions are filled, HCPS continues to actively seek and employ qualified individuals to meet the growing demand for early childhood education.

To recruit Early Childhood providers, including Special Educators, the Coordinator of Special Education collaborates with Towson University for internships in the Infants and Toddlers program and regional preschools. They meet with interns annually to discuss practices and recruitment strategies, ensuring a pipeline of high-quality providers. Additionally, HCPS partners with Harford Community College, Frostburg University, and Towson University to offer field placements and internships, providing students with hands-on experience in early childhood education settings.

Grow-your-own: The Talent Pathways Project is an innovative employee development campaign and recruitment strategy aimed at building strong talent pathways for all positions within HCPS. This initiative focuses on talent acquisition and development from both external and internal sources, emphasizing the "Grow Your Own" approach. As part of this project, HCPS is designing and launching a Model School intended to attract and train future educators, including student interns and non-traditional staff. This Model School (Harford Academy new construction), which will include Pre-K classrooms, serves as a testing ground for innovative models to improve equitable education outcomes for students. ***NEW*** HCPS's pilot model school program opened in 2024 at Roye Williams Elementary School. [References: Talent Pathways Needs Assessment Report; HCPS presents Talent Pathways update – Baltimore Sun; HCPS Talent Pathways Overview, August 2023; Model School Pilot Cohort Orientation Feedback 2.2024](#)

HCPS offers the Teacher Academy of Maryland (TAM) program for high school students interested in a career in education. This program provides students with a Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) Career and Technology Education (CTE) program in the Education pathway of the Health and Human Services Career Cluster. Through TAM, students gain a comprehensive understanding of the teaching profession, including its history, purposes, issues, and qualifications. In an effort to expand Pre-K offerings and support the high school early childhood pathway, HCPS leadership, along with representatives from various departments, visited Washington County to explore full-day Pre-K programs in high schools. Inspired by this model, HCPS is developing a strategic plan to implement full-day Pre-Kindergarten programs within high school facilities by the 2025-2026 school year, with plans to expand to additional high school sites in subsequent years. This expansion aims to provide quality Pre-K education to a larger demographic of students while creating more career exploration in early childhood education for our future educators.

Assistant Credentialing: HCPS employs 57 Pre-Kindergarten paraeducators (assistants) in which the HCPS Office of Early Childhood supports the credentialing of Pre-Kindergarten assistants through the CDA (Child Development Associate®) process. The information provided gives insights into the strategies we are utilizing to support the qualifications and progress of Pre-Kindergarten paraeducators within the HCPS system. As we aim to complete the credentialing process by the end of the 2025-2026 school year, the current qualifications status of our Pre-Kindergarten paraeducators is as follows: out of the 57 paraeducators, 4 hold a Masters (MA) degree, 21 have a Bachelors (BA) degree, and 13 possess an Associates (AA) degree. Additionally, 2 paraeducators are in the process of completing their associate degree, while 11 are actively working toward their Child Development Associate (CDA) certification. Notably, 6 paraeducators successfully obtained their CDA certification in 2023. [Reference: 2023 HCEA-ESP MOU Para AA CDA](#)

CDA Progress: HCPS Office of Early Childhood is continuing to work with the Human Resources Department on the following plan for Pre-Kindergarten assistants for Child Development Associate (CDA) Degree. During the 2022-2023 school year the support consisted of the following.

- Identified Instructional Assistants in need of CDA training or wish to obtain an AA degree.
- Revised the Instructional Assistant job description to include CDA qualification or AA degree.
- Identified a training venue-Maryland Family Network
- Hired a temporary employee to support staff in all elements of the CDA/AA process.
- Provided CDA/AA degree requirement information to Instructional Assistants and school leadership teams.
- Supported the registration process for completing the Child Development Associate Certificate

During the 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 school year we are continuing to support paraeducator credentialing by:

- Promoting the CDA or AA process to eligible HCPS staff and private providers.
- Continue to identify HCPS Instructional Assistants needing CDA training or to obtain an AA.
- Supporting eligible HCPS staff and private providers in the registration process for completing the Child Development Associate Certificate.
- Supporting eligible HCPS staff and private providers in completing the CDA/AA coursework, CDA application, CDA portfolio, and CDA exam.
- Providing KRA grant funding of approximately \$500 for an estimated 20 HCPS eligible staff and private providers for the CDA coursework or towards an AA degree.

Utilization of KRA Funding: During the 2023-2024 school year, HCPS utilized KRA funding to hire temporary Early Childhood CDA support personnel. This person is responsible for managing and supporting all aspects of the CDA process for HCPS assistants and community providers throughout the duration of the grant. This data showcases a diverse range of educational backgrounds among Pre-Kindergarten paraeducators, indicating a commitment to professional development through various degree programs and the CDA certification process. The support provided by the Early Childhood Office, coupled with the utilization of KRA funding, demonstrates a proactive approach to enhancing the qualifications and skills of the workforce involved in early childhood education within HCPS. Harford County continues to address all challenges associated with Pre-Kindergarten staffing, professional

development and materials and supplies. Below is a list of additional challenges and changes needed to support transforming HCPS practices and achieving the intended outcomes of the Blueprint.

Barrier	Strategy
Secure funding to maintain Early Childhood Teacher Specialist, and obtain additional Pre-Kindergarten teachers, Pre-Kindergarten assistants, special area teachers and special educators to support HCPS Pre-K and community programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HCPS will continue to apply for MSDE grants to support funding for staff to support Pre-Kindergarten. • HCPS Early Childhood Office will continue to advocate for funding through operational funds or grant funding for staff to support Pre-Kindergarten.
Hire additional highly qualified Pre-Kindergarten teachers, Pre-Kindergarten assistants, special area teachers and special educators to support HCPS Pre-K and community programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HCPS will continue to seek out and recruit qualified early childhood teachers (general educators and special educators) to hire utilizing all Human Resources recruitment strategies. • HCPS will provide professional development and coaching for special area staff to support developmentally appropriate practices. • HCPS will provide professional development and supportive coaching to all staff and providers in implementing developmentally appropriate practices and evidence-based practices to support social/emotional/behavioral growth of young children.
Secure funding to support the purchase of materials and supplies for high-quality Pre-K classrooms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HCPS will continue to utilize Maryland Blueprint Pre-Kindergarten per pupil allocation and to advocate for funding through operational funds or grant funding for staff to support Pre-Kindergarten. • HCPS will advocate for operational funds or apply for other MSDE grant funding to purchase materials, furniture, and supplies.
A limited number of qualified early childhood candidates are available for Pre-Kindergarten positions due to the current teacher shortage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HCPS coordinates with Harford Community College on hosting field placements and student internships in our early childhood programs. • HCPS continues to partner with colleges/universities to train and recruit high quality, diverse teachers. • HCPS posts positions on the HCPS website, with the online application, as well as all of our social media channels. Several job boards such as Indeed and SchoolSpring. • HCPS provides professional development and supportive coaching to all staff and providers in implementing developmentally appropriate practices, curriculum, and classroom management. • HCPS Human Resources meets with all conditional hires to create a certification completion plan.
The Blueprint credentialing for Pre-Kindergarten paraeducators reduces the pool of eligible candidates.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HCPS Office of Early Childhood is promoting the CDA or AA process to other assistants within HCPS to increase eligibility. • HCPS will support students in the early childhood high school pathway program about the procedures involved in obtaining CDA or AA credentials and possible job opportunities. • HCPS coordinates with Harford Community College, on hosting field placements and student internships in our early childhood programs. • HCPS continues to partner with colleges/universities to train and recruit high quality, diverse assistants.

IV. Kindergarten Readiness

NEW Discuss the LEA's plans to ensure all students in Pre-K programs, public and private, are ready for kindergarten. Plans should include strategies for supporting the development and implementation of the instructional program in mixed-delivery settings and using data (e.g., Kindergarten Readiness Assessment) to adapt instruction. Considerations:

- Private provider collaboration
- Selection and use of materials
- Teacher training and professional development
- Resource sharing
- Specific instructional strategies for early learning
- Transition from half-day to full-day Pre-K
- Alignment between Pre-K and K-2
- Transition into Pre-K and from Pre-K to Kindergarten
- Student groups (special education, multilingual learners, students experiencing homelessness)
- **Required Data Analysis:** Through an analysis of data, discuss progress towards meeting the Blueprint Outcome of ensuring all Pre-K students are ready for kindergarten.

Criteria for Success

- Describes a cohesive and coherent plan that addresses all considerations provided to ensure all Pre-K students are ready for kindergarten
- Analyzes data to identify trends, needs, and projections for kindergarten readiness
- Cites specific strategies the LEA utilizes to develop, implement, and adapt the instructional program, including leveraging KRA and other data to make decisions

HCPS is committed to kindergarten readiness for all students.

HCPS aims to ensure kindergarten readiness for all students enrolled in both public and community Pre-K programs. HCPS is committed to supporting the development and implementation of instructional programs within mixed-delivery settings, ensuring a smooth and seamless transition for students as they progress to kindergarten.

Private Provider Collaboration Strategies: HCPS is committed to nurturing robust and enduring partnerships with private providers and members of the Harford County Childcare Directors Association, aiming to enhance school readiness and seamlessly integrate the Blueprint initiative. Our collaboration strategies are multifaceted, encompassing various communication channels and initiatives to provide comprehensive support to childcare providers.

One of the cornerstone strategies involves maintaining open lines of communication with private providers. The HCPS Office of Early Childhood regularly contacts providers through quarterly emails and phone calls, offering support, resources, and partnership opportunities. Additionally, we actively recruit Blueprint partners by engaging in regular meetings with individual providers, ensuring they are informed about the benefits and requirements of participating in the initiative. Utilizing feedback from provider surveys (detailed in the 2023 Blueprint Plan), we continuously refine our strategies to overcome challenges and ensure the successful implementation of the Blueprint Pre-K mixed delivery system. By working hand in hand with private providers, we strive to create a supportive and enriching environment for early childhood education, ultimately benefiting children and families across Harford County.

Collaboration extends beyond individual providers to broader associations and committees. We meet monthly with Harford County Childcare Directors and quarterly with the Maryland Family Childcare

Alliance to exchange information and collaborate on pertinent matters. Moreover, we keep directors updated on any changes or updates in regulations and policies, ensuring compliance and informed decision-making.

Reference: [Childcare Directors Blueprint Survey](#)

Our efforts also focus on enhancing the skills and knowledge of childcare providers through training and professional development opportunities. We offer workshops on various topics such as Developmentally Appropriate Practices, Maryland State Accreditation, and school readiness. These sessions provide valuable insights and resources to support providers in delivering high-quality early childhood education.



In addition to professional development, we facilitate access to community resources and support services for childcare providers and families. This includes information on special education and English Language support, childcare scholarships, and certification programs. We also collaborate with partners to identify and reach families eligible for Pre-K services, ensuring equitable access to early childhood education. We provide community support by offering special education services and related therapies to childcare facilities, ensuring all children receive the support they need to thrive. **Reference:** [ECAC Birth to 5 Supports](#); [Private Providers - HCPS Birth to Five Supports](#); [HCPS Early Childhood Online Resources](#)

To promote transparency and positive relationships, we share effective communication strategies with providers and families. This includes presenting school readiness workshops and utilizing multiple languages in recruitment and marketing efforts. Articulation meetings with private Pre-Kindergarten providers facilitate coordination between public and private educational systems, fostering seamless transitions for students. **References:** [Articulation Documents](#); [Transition Supports](#)

Selection of Use of Materials Strategies: In the selection and utilization of materials, HCPS adopts a curriculum firmly rooted in developmentally appropriate and research-based practices, targeting essential early learning domains outlined in the MCCRS and Early Learning standards/KRA. To ensure inclusivity and foster a broad understanding of the world, we prioritize aligning materials with diverse perspectives and cultures, encouraging hands-on and interactive learning experiences that promote sensory exploration and fine motor skills development. Our approach involves engaging both public and private providers in the selection process, granting access to a unified set of curriculum resources approved by MSDE and aligned to educational standards. KRA readiness data is shared with private providers to facilitate collaboration and support school readiness initiatives.

A 'Materials and Curriculum Review Committee,' comprising diverse stakeholders, is responsible for conducting thorough evaluations of proposed instructional materials and curriculum. This standardized process involves thoughtful selection of team members, initial individual evaluations based on predetermined criteria, collaborative discussions to share insights, opportunities for public input, and final approval from the General Curriculum Committee and the Board of Education. Through thoughtful material selection, we aim to provide a comprehensive and enriching early learning experience aligned with MSDE Accreditation and EXCELS Level 5 standards. **Reference:** [Accreditation and EXCELS level 5 certificates](#)

HCPS utilizes data from KRA and feedback from MSDE to make informed decisions on materials selection, incorporating multisensory experiences, educational technology, and tools for holistic development. Plans for new playgrounds at six schools address various skills identified in MSDE accreditation standards, while an inclusive approach accommodates diverse student needs. Proactive parental engagement initiatives, such as providing materials for home use and bilingual resources, complement efforts to promote early literacy skills and parent involvement. Judy Centers allocate funds for school readiness materials and parent workshops, further enhancing educational foundations and social development. Through these strategies, HCPS strives to provide a comprehensive and enriching early learning environment for all students.

Teacher Training and Professional Development Strategies: HCPS is deeply committed to the continuous training and professional development of teachers, providers, and assistants in the Pre-Kindergarten mixed delivery system. Recognizing the importance of ongoing learning and collaboration, HCPS ensures that all educators have access to the necessary tools and knowledge for success. The professional development initiatives cover a wide range of topics essential for effective early childhood education, including new hire orientation, curriculum development, assessment strategies, learning through play methodologies, developmentally appropriate practices, kindergarten readiness, social and emotional awareness, differentiated instruction, technology integration, utilization of Pre-K paraeducators, and updates to Blueprint legislation and requirements.

These professional development needs are carefully identified through various sources, including parent survey data on programming, MSDE accreditation, self-appraisals, teacher requests, district initiatives, and ongoing teacher observations and evaluations. HCPS maintains a comprehensive approach to monitoring and assessing the effectiveness of professional development initiatives, incorporating teacher input and evaluation, as well as formal classroom observations and walk-throughs to identify areas for improvement and enhancement. HCPS ensures that a minimum of 15 hours of professional development is provided annually for Pre-K teachers, paraeducators, and private providers, with sessions typically commencing each August. Importantly, private providers and school administrators are actively encouraged to participate in these professional development opportunities throughout the school year, fostering collaboration and alignment across different educational settings.

To further support educators, HCPS has designated 3 eleven-month and 1 ten-month Early Childhood Teacher Specialists and Birth to 5 Special Education Teacher Specialists. These specialists offer specialized job-embedded professional learning and classroom supports, which include planning, modeling lessons, co-teaching, data analysis, and creating developmentally appropriate environments.

HCPS prioritizes targeted professional development opportunities for providers, focusing on areas that can enhance their practices and contribute to higher EXCELS ratings. Moreover, HCPS promotes, supports, and provides funding for the CDA or AA process for eligible private providers, assigning CDA specialists to work individually with paraeducators and providers to address specific concerns and guide them through the application process. Additionally, HCPS provides H.O.P.E Training to ECAC partners, Judy Center members, childcare directors, and early childhood staff, aimed at enhancing positive experiences and relationships with children. Collaborative planning sessions are held weekly, facilitated by Early Childhood Teacher Specialists, to provide additional support and guidance. In collaboration with Maryland Family Network and Pro Solutions, HCPS offers comprehensive Pyramid Model training for all early childhood educators, assistants, and providers to support social learning foundations. These training sessions are conducted across various platforms to accommodate different learning preferences and ensure educators remain current with best practices. [References: Early Childhood PD 23-24; Sample Parent and Provider Communication Workshops and Resources; Sample Pyramid Model Training](#)

Resource Sharing Strategies: Consistently sharing resources with families, teachers, and providers throughout the year is a fundamental aspect of HCPS's approach to early childhood education. This commitment encompasses academic instruction, motor skills, and social-emotional development, all geared towards fostering kindergarten readiness. Utilizing a variety of mediums including email, printed materials, virtual workshops, in-person sessions, and learn-with-me sessions, HCPS ensures that information is accessible to all stakeholders in both English and Spanish.

A central platform for resource sharing is the Canvas Learning Management System, accessible to all HCPS employees, families, and students. This collaborative digital space facilitates efficient sharing and access to a wide array of materials, including curriculum resources, pacing guides, model lessons, accreditation materials, state education standards, transition presentations, assessment tools, and social-emotional resources designed for classroom implementation. [Reference: Learning Management System – Canvas](#)



The Early Childhood Advisory Council, composed of experts from both public and private educational spheres, as well as family and community support entities, plays a crucial role in advocating for and fostering school readiness initiatives for children from birth to age five. One highlight of the year is the Thrive by Five Summit, organized by HCPS, which engages families and providers in workshops specifically designed to promote school readiness.

HCPS also invests in resources such as Bedtime in a Box, social-emotional materials, and school readiness bags, which are provided to families and providers attending workshops to support school readiness efforts. Additionally, Judy Centers located at Magnolia, Deerfield, and Hall Crossroads Elementary serve as vital connectors within low-income communities, offering professional development, playgroups for families, and serving as information hubs. To further engage families, Littles University hosts monthly virtual read-aloud sessions conducted by HCPS staff. Families receive online videos and corresponding books, promoting read-aloud engagement, and building age-appropriate home libraries for young children. The Harford County Public Schools Parent Academy offers a series of workshops designed to involve parents as partners in their children's education, providing valuable information and resources to support their children's success.

Moreover, the HCPS Office of Early Childhood facilitates resource exchange with childcare directors during monthly meetings, fostering collaboration between the public and private sectors. Through these efforts, diverse family needs are addressed through shared resources such as programming updates, childcare scholarship information, and community events.

Additionally, the Infants and Toddlers program implements Stepping Stones, a learner readiness group for parents and children, focusing on various skills essential for school readiness, including social skills, early literacy, and math literacy. The program also supports parents in implementing social-emotional supports at home through the Chicago Parent Program. Through these comprehensive efforts, HCPS is dedicated to ensuring that all children have access to the resources and support they need for a successful start in their educational journey.

Specific Instructional Strategies for Early Learning Strategies: HCPS employs a comprehensive approach to prepare Pre-Kindergarten students for kindergarten by incorporating evidence-based instructional strategies. Progress is monitored through formal and informal assessments and reported to families quarterly. The program integrates professional development, a science-of-reading focus, data analysis, hands-on exploration, literacy across disciplines, and daily social-emotional learning. This ensures a robust early childhood education, emphasizing developmentally appropriate strategies. Formative assessments in daily instruction enable teachers to tailor enrichment and remediation. These strategies are shared with families and providers to support overall kindergarten readiness.

Harford County Public Schools employs a comprehensive array of evidence-based instructional strategies aimed at nurturing the holistic development of every student. These strategies encompass direct instruction, guided learning, and hands-on activities, addressing various facets of a child's growth, including social-emotional skills, literacy, numeracy, scientific inquiry, social studies, and motor development. Aligned with both Maryland College and Career Readiness Standards and Early Learning Standards, these instructional approaches ensure consistency and coherence across the curriculum. The HCPS Office of Early Childhood and Department of Special Education actively collaborate with private providers, disseminating these strategies through articulation meetings, professional development sessions, and onsite support from Teacher Specialists. Furthermore, to continually enhance the effectiveness of instructional practices, ongoing data analysis is conducted through a blend of formal and informal assessments. Recognizing the importance of family and provider involvement, instructional strategies are shared through engaging events like Learn with Me workshops, focusing on modeling oral language, phonemic awareness, fundamental math concepts, and social-emotional support techniques, thereby fostering a collaborative approach to education.

Teachers utilize the following to plan learning engagements:

- Maryland College and Career Ready Standards;

- Maryland Early Learning Standards for Pre-Kindergarten;
- Harford County Public Schools Pre-Kindergarten Scope and Sequence;
- Appropriate data/records for student evaluation and instructional planning;
- Individual student skill level for differentiation based on previous lessons, observation, questioning, formal and informal assessments
- Family input;
- Other service provider input such as special educator, speech and language pathologists, Pre-Kindergarten assistants, EL professionals, and other service-related providers;



Transitioning from HCPS Half/Full-day Pre-K Program or Private Pre-K Programing to Kindergarten Strategies:

Harford County Public Schools places a high priority on ensuring a thoughtful and supportive transition process for young students entering the school system, whether transitioning from a half-day Pre-K program to a full-day Pre-K, from a provider to Pre-K, or into kindergarten. To facilitate this transition, several initiatives are in place as follows. **References:** [Articulation Documents](#); [Transition Supports](#)

Transition Planning Meetings are held in the Spring for students with disabilities, bringing together staff, previous providers, and families to address specific needs and develop strategies for a smooth adjustment to a full-day Pre-K or kindergarten schedule. Additionally, a parent training session titled "Let's Talk Transitions" was held on February 22, 2024, focusing on transition-related topics for families of children in the Infants and Toddlers program.

HCPS conducts articulation meetings each Spring from Pre-K to kindergarten and from providers to Pre-K, providing a platform to discuss the academic, behavioral, and social-emotional development of all students. Preschool playdates are organized every August for incoming Pre-K and kindergarten students, allowing them to familiarize themselves with the school environment and engage in social interactions with other families registered in the program. The HCPS Office of Early Childhood offers school readiness and transition presentations at schools and private providers for families transitioning into the public school system.

The HCPS Parent Academy hosts workshops designed to engage parents as partners in their children's education, providing valuable information and resources to support their children's success. To ease the transition, HCPS implements a gradual entrance approach where Pre-K and kindergarten students attend for a shorter duration alongside a parent or guardian before transitioning to full-day participation. Back-to-School Night events offer parents insights into the school schedule, expectations, and overall atmosphere, fostering a sense of community and collaboration with educators. All three Judy Center sites offer playgroups to support and mirror strategies similar to Pre-K, aiming to prepare young children for the transition into the school system. Through these comprehensive efforts, HCPS ensures a smooth and successful transition for all students and their families.

Open communication between parents and teachers is encouraged through newsletters, updates, and invitations for parental involvement, addressing potential challenges. HCPS also provides resources and support services for families, offering guidance on establishing consistent routines at home, managing potential separation anxiety, and promoting positive attitudes toward the transition. To further support families, resources such as the Transition to School video and "A Look at Pre-K" video are available on the HCPS website. Additionally, HCPS proudly offers Parent and Community Engagement (PACE) Liaisons in every school, providing comprehensive support from birth to career for students and families. Parent feedback and surveys play a crucial role in gathering input on their child's experiences, allowing them to offer suggestions for improvement. Furthermore, initiatives such as the Parent Connection newsletter strengthen the home-school bond by providing families with crucial information, events, community resources, and tips to navigate the school year effectively. **References:** [HCPS Parent Engagement Survey English & Spanish](#); [HCPS Early Childhood Online Resources](#)

Alignment between Pre-K and K-2 Strategies: Articulation meetings play a crucial role in facilitating seamless student transitions between grade levels. These meetings bring together teachers, specialists,

and administrators to discuss curriculum alignment, assess student progress, and share essential information across all student groups, spanning from Pre-K to Grade 2. Recognizing the importance of continuity in education, HCPS extends this collaborative process to include private providers and Head Start programs, ensuring comprehensive alignment beyond the school system. **References:** [Articulation Documents](#); [Transition Supports](#)

Maintaining curriculum consistency is a top priority for HCPS, which emphasizes continuous communication among curriculum specialists in core subjects, as well as ELL and Special Education Specialists. This ongoing dialogue guarantees alignment across various grade levels, providing students with a cohesive and integrated educational experience. Professional development is considered essential for all teachers, from Pre-K to Grade 2, to ensure uniform instructional practices. This year, HCPS has placed particular emphasis on Science of Reading Training for all teachers, aligning literacy practices in every early childhood classroom with the latest research-based methodologies. **References:** [Early Childhood PD 23-24](#); [Science of Reading PD](#)

Pre-K teacher specialists play a vital role in offering personalized professional learning experiences to providers and staff from Pre-K through Grade 2. These sessions are tailored to align seamlessly with the county curriculum and incorporate best practices to enhance teaching and learning across all early childhood education settings. All classrooms within HCPS adhere to Maryland College and Career Readiness Standards, providing a unified and standards-aligned foundation for the educational journey of each student. To further support alignment efforts, providers are encouraged to participate in county-wide professional learning opportunities focused on Pre-K education. Through these collaborative efforts, HCPS ensures that every student receives a consistent and high-quality educational experience, setting them up for success as they progress through their academic journey.

Student Groups Strategies: The HCPS Pre-K program is committed to fostering an inclusive and supportive learning environment through a comprehensive array of strategies. At the heart of this commitment is a Tiered application system that prioritizes acceptance for families in specific subgroups, including those with incomes at or below 300% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines, children in foster care, students with special needs, and English Language Learners. HCPS prioritizes family engagement opportunities to support families with school readiness.

To ensure equitable access to resources and information, HCPS collaborates with LASOS to provide language support for all families and providers. This partnership ensures that language barriers do not hinder families' engagement in their child's education. Access to school-based human resources is a cornerstone of HCPS's inclusive approach. ELL Educators, Special Educators, counselors, Pyramid Model coaches, school-based administrators, and other specialists are available to support students and providers as needed. Additionally, HCPS allocates resources to address the unique challenges faced by students experiencing homelessness, including transportation assistance, access to school supplies, and additional academic support. This holistic approach ensures that every student receives the support they need to thrive academically and emotionally.

Inclusive practices for students with disabilities are paramount in HCPS, with a focus on ensuring access to appropriate resources and adapting instructional methods to meet individual needs. This includes the development and implementation of Individualized Education Programs tailored to each student's strengths and challenges, whether in public schools or community settings. Ongoing professional development provided by HCPS equips staff and providers with the skills needed to support diverse student populations effectively. This includes training in working with children with disabilities, multilingual learners, and those experiencing homelessness. **References:** [ECAC Birth to 5 Supports](#); [Private Providers - HCPS Birth to Five Supports](#); [HCPS Early Childhood Online Resources](#)

Culturally responsive teaching practices are woven into the fabric of HCPS, fostering an environment that respects and values the diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds of students. These practices create a learning environment where every student feels seen, heard, and valued. HCPS employs trauma-informed practices, including standards for Healthy Outcomes from Positive Experiences (H.O.P.E.) training and Pyramid Model Practices, to address the unique emotional and psychological needs of

students who have experienced trauma or homelessness. These practices create a supportive environment where every student feels safe.

Data Analysis Strategies: HCPS employs a data-driven approach to comprehensively assess the readiness of students for kindergarten. This includes gathering relevant data through assessments, observations, and feedback to form a holistic understanding of each child's developmental stage. Tools like the Pre-K Skills Checklist, Kindergarten Readiness Assessment, DIBELS, and Student Numeracy Assessment Progressions (SNAP), Early Learning Assessment are utilized to measure various aspects of a child's development and school readiness, encompassing language skills, foundational math skills, cognitive abilities, and social-emotional readiness. This data is analyzed and shared with internal and external early childhood stakeholders to support and achieve kindergarten readiness. The chart below demonstrates reading readiness from the beginning of kindergarten to the end of kindergarten for SY22-23 and SY23-24.

DIBELS (Kindergarten, 1)	2022 23				2023 24			
	n-Size	% Prof/Adv	n-Size	% Prof/Adv	n-Size	% Prof/Adv	n-Size	% Prof/Adv
Beginning of Year	2,582	51.1%	1,114	72.7%	2,508	51.5%	818	79.5%
Middle of Year	1,607	69.6%	927	74.0%	NA	NA	NA	23.3%
End of Year	1,205	77.7%	777	79.7%	NA	NA	NA	NA

The chart below demonstrates mathematical readiness from the beginning of kindergarten to the end of kindergarten for SY22-23 and SY23-24

SNAP (Kindergarten)	2022 23		2023 24	
	n-Size	% Prof/Adv	n-Size	% Prof/Adv
Fall	2,515	82.7%	2,490	87.0%
Winter	2,235	95.3%	NA	86.1%
Spring	2,653	95.3%	NA	NA

The chart below demonstrates school readiness for RELA and mathematics from the beginning of Pre-Kindergarten to the end of Pre-Kindergarten for SY22-23 and SY23-24

PK Checklist Assessment	2022 23		2023 24	
	n-Size	% Prof/Adv	n-Size	% Prof/Adv
Fall	755	71.9%	766	74.0%
Winter	595	94.3%	NA	94.2%
Spring	784	98.6%	NA	NA

Evaluation of School Readiness in Harford County - KRA Data; [Reference: MSDE Data File Tab 4](#)

- **General Trends:**
 - HCPS uses the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) to evaluate school readiness.
 - Historically, HCPS has remained consistent with Maryland's average in readiness percentages.
 - In the 2022-2023 school year, 41% of kindergarteners in Harford County demonstrated readiness, marking a 4-point decrease from 2019-2020.

- **Demographic Breakdown:**
 - African American kindergarteners: 30% readiness (increase from the previous year).
 - Asian kindergarteners: 44% readiness.
 - White kindergarteners: 46% readiness.
 - Hispanic kindergarteners: 30% readiness (increase from last year).
 - Students with disabilities: 7% gain.
 - Low-income children: Significant gain from 19% to 30%.
- **Prior Care Influence:**
 - 58% of students with formal prior care demonstrated readiness.
 - 33% of students with informal prior care demonstrated readiness.
- **Challenges:** The largest readiness gaps are for English Learners, students with disabilities, and students experiencing poverty. The HCPS KRA scores highlight a need for additional support in Social Foundations, particularly in social and emotional skills, self-regulation, peer interaction, rule-following, and expressing needs and wants appropriately. Despite challenges, gains were observed in most subgroups.



HCPS Initiatives for Improvement:

- **Training and Resources:** HCPS has implemented a comprehensive approach to social-emotional learning, beginning with Pyramid Model training for Pre-Kindergarten staff in 2018-2019 and extending to providers and families in 2019-2020. In the same year, all kindergarten teachers and school counselors also received Pyramid Model training. This commitment to ongoing professional development includes continued Pyramid Model training, resources, and support for HCPS early childhood staff, families, and private providers. To enhance accessibility and support, HCPS utilizes Canvas (LMS) to develop modules and host Social Emotional resources accessible to all Pre-K teachers, facilitating direct support for students in building social foundations. Additionally, the utilization of Social Emotional Awareness kits in daily instruction, known as SEA kits or Teach Town, further reinforces social-emotional learning. To ensure comprehensive support, HCPS has procured Social Emotional Awareness kits, materials, and resources for Pre-Kindergarten, kindergarten, and providers, emphasizing growth in the social-emotional domain across all levels.
- **Curriculum Adaptations:** Pre-Kindergarten teachers employ strategies aligned with Maryland Early Standards. Regular KRA data reviews allow for tailored instruction and address performance gaps for all students including economically disadvantaged students, ELL, and students with disabilities.
- **Professional Development:** Annual evidence-based professional development is provided for HCPS early childhood staff and providers in RELA, math, and social-emotional domains. Annual collaboration opportunities allow teachers to enhance instruction based on data.
- **Expanding Pre-Kindergarten and Provider Collaboration:** With a focus on inclusivity and equity, efforts are directed towards serving Tier 1 students, encompassing English Learners, students with disabilities, and families with limited income. HCPS embraces a mixed delivery approach, bridging both public and private providers to maximize accessibility and reach. Collaboration between these entities is integral, fostering intentional articulation to identify and design targeted support and interventions tailored to the diverse needs of students. Through strategic alignment and cooperation, HCPS endeavors to ensure that every child receives the foundational support necessary for their academic and personal growth, irrespective of their background or circumstances.
- **Community Engagement:** HCPS provides Thrive by Five Workshops for providers and families. Topics include disability identification, bedtime routines, behavioral supports, importance of Reading Pk-2, Importance of Reading Birth-3, Getting Connected to HCPS and School Readiness, Importance of Writing, Let's Get Moving, Value of Play, Everyday Math, Potty Training Strategies, Visuals Supports, Learning Through Daily Activities Finding Quality Childcare, Supporting Non-English-Speaking Families Sección en español, Distribution of Bedtime in a Box, Learning in a Box, and School Readiness backpacks as prizes for providers and families.
- **Inclusivity and Accessibility:** HCPS is committed to increasing outreach, participation, and accessibility for workshops. Strategies include diverse session formats, in-person and virtual sessions, and incentives for participation.

- **Continuous Improvement:** HCPS has an ongoing commitment to using evidence-based standards to expand outreach efforts and is committed to collaborative governance with private providers, families, and all stakeholders.

KRA Data *Reference: MSDE Data File Tab 4*

School Year	% of students demonstrating readiness	% of students approaching readiness	% of students emerging readiness
2023/2024	46%	35%	18%
2022/2023	41%	37%	22%
2021/2022	41%	36%	23%
2020-2021	Not administered		
2019/2020	45%	37%	19%

Students demonstrating readiness on the KRA, broken down in the following racial/ethnic groups:

School Year	African American	American Indian	Asian	Hispanic/Latino	Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	Two or More	White
2023/2022	34.2%	NA	52%	29.2%	NA	42.7%	52.6%
2022/2022	30%	NA	44%	30%	NA	36%	46%
2021/2022	27%	NA	58%	26%	NA	30%	48%
2020/2021	Not administered						
2019/2020	35%	NA	NA	31%	NA	48%	50%

Students demonstrating readiness on the KRA, broken down in the following in the following categories:

School Year	Children with Disabilities	English Language Learner	Low Income
2023/2024	14.4%	7.4%	32%
2022/2023	16%	6%	30%
2021/2022	9%	9%	19%
2020-2021	Not administered		
2019/2020	15%	NA	29%

Current Average KRA Scale Score by Domain			
Domain	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
Language and Literacy	267	267	269
Mathematics	267	266	267
Social Foundations	270	271	272
Physical Well-being and Motor Development	273	273	278

Overall, HCPS is committed to meeting the ongoing demand for early childhood readiness support through collaboration. Using evidence-based standards, we conduct workshops for childcare providers and families to enhance overall school readiness based on KRA data. To improve student performance, HCPS employs various strategies, including mixed delivery Pre-K programs, teacher professional development, and data review. Data insights inform differentiated instruction, tailoring teaching strategies to each student's needs. HCPS actively involves parents in the data analysis process, collaborating to reinforce strategies at home for kindergarten readiness. This collaborative approach ensures a seamless and supportive transition for Pre-K students entering kindergarten.

PILLAR 2

V. A High-Quality and Diverse Teacher Workforce

Initial Blueprint Implementation Plan Reference: Questions 28-36

In March 2023, the LEA described how it would recruit and hire a high-quality and diverse teacher workforce. Responses included identifying the most critical hiring needs, strategies for recruiting and hiring a diverse workforce, and how the LEA would partner with institutions of higher education and educator preparation programs to build talent pipelines in response to its needs (e.g., strategic placement and support of teacher candidates, full certification of conditionally certified teachers, grow your own programs, alternative preparation programs, etc.). Based on implementation of the LEA's plans over the last year, discuss the district's progress in transforming its systems and practices and achieving the intended outcomes of the Blueprint. Responses must address the following questions.

- What progress has been made in implementation related to both planned activities and anticipated outcomes? If progress has been limited, what challenges has the LEA encountered? Consider, identify, and refer to available data as needed to demonstrate progress.
- How is the LEA adapting its plans to mitigate challenges and/or ensure continued progress and future success? Which strategies are not working that the LEA will no longer implement, and which new strategies does the LEA intend to implement? Include the rationale for adjustments.
- **Required Data Analysis:** Through an analysis of data, discuss progress towards meeting the district's staffing needs and the Blueprint outcome of recruiting and hiring a high-quality and diverse teacher workforce.

Criteria for Success

- Identifies highest priority areas and/or strategies discussed in the March 2023 submission and provides detailed updates related to progress, including identifying challenges where progress has been limited
- Identifies and provides the rationale for new/revised strategies, activities, and/or outcomes that have been developed or revised since the 2023 submission
- Discusses how specific feedback provided for the 2023 submission has been addressed if applicable
- Analyzes and uses quantitative data (e.g., staffing data) to demonstrate progress towards recruiting and hiring a high-quality and diverse teacher workforce

HCPS is committed to recruiting and retaining high-quality & diverse staff.

HCPS continues to use an equity lens in all staff recruiting, hiring, retention, and promotional processes. Recruitment outreach included both in-person and virtual recruitment reaching the states of Maryland, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Delaware, Virginia, Washington DC, North Carolina, Ohio, New York, New Jersey, Michigan, Georgia, and Alabama. Nine of the events we attended were sponsored by a Historically Black College or University or sponsored by an organization focusing on diversity centered recruitment. Alabama was a new state for us to visit, and we increased our presence at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). HCPS conducts an analysis of job fairs at the conclusion of each "hiring season" to decide which events have not been fruitful and should be discontinued, those that should continue, and those that require additional years of attendance before a decision can be made.

We also increased our presence at local community-based events, especially in more diverse areas of our county. This allowed us to streamline the application process for potential applicants while providing the convenience of support within the community. These events assisted us in achieving our recruitment goals while removing potential barriers to hiring.

Strategies deployed specifically to diversity recruitment included:

- Collaborative partnerships with Historically Black Colleges and Universities
- Attend Diversity Centered Events
- Community Recruitment Events
- Diversity Retention and Recruitment Specialist
- Conditional Teacher Opportunities and Support
- Advanced hiring timelines at schools designated as priority, to give those schools early access to highly qualified and diverse candidates.
- Working with Diversity Recruitment and Retention Elevating Educators Workgroup to build community partnerships
- Working with Talent Pathways and Superintendent's Task Force on Equity on evaluating and enhancing recruitment and retention initiatives
- Attendance at University of Maryland Eastern Shore Men of Color in Education program
- Grow Your Own – Teacher Academy of Maryland (TAM), GETMore Program, Apprenticeships
- Open Contracts offered in targeted areas –Teachers of Color
- Diversity Hiring Best Practices Professional Development to all System Leaders
- Recruitment Team and Interview Panels reflective of candidate pool we wish to hire
- Sources of Diverse Candidates: interns, rehires, HCPS alum, substitutes, relocation to area, employee referral, transfer from another LEA, conditional/career changer
- Our recruiters and administrators/hiring managers received their annual bias training, which included adding professional development strategies to diversify and retain staff.



Due to these efforts, when comparing MSDE staffing reports in 2022 and 2023 we have increased the diversity of our new hires:

- We hired 322 teachers in 2022, and 308 teachers in 2023.
- Teachers of color representation among new teachers increased 5.9 percentage points
- 18.5% of all certificated hires were persons of color. This is a 45% increase in Persons of Color among new teacher hires.

References: [2022-2023 Recruitment & Retention Informational Report](#); [MSDE Data File Tab 5B, 5C](#)

NEW We currently plan to add the following:

- Provide professional development to our system leaders so that they are well equipped to answer diversity centered questions from potential candidates and specifically from diverse candidates.
- Continue to increase the number of diverse recruiters on the recruitment team
- Continue to increase the number of community-based fairs attended in our diverse communities
- Continue to increase marketing to attract a diverse pool of applicants and those interested in conditional certification
- Employ teachers to become social media ambassadors to share their HCPS story

IHE Partnership: Our Diversity Retention and Recruitment Specialist continues efforts to support the retention and recruitment of teachers and staff traditionally under-represented in the district. In addition to retention and recruitment efforts already underway, this year's focus is on the expansion of university partnerships, especially HBCUs. ***NEW*** This year, we established two MOUs with Coppin State University (CSU) for FY25. The first MOU is to support our conditionally certified teachers by providing direct billing assistance with CSU. Our goal is to reduce out-of-pocket expenses for teachers completing their certification requirements and ensuring that teachers have access to direct billing arrangements from a diverse group of IHE partners. The second MOU relates to the placement of CSU interns in HCPS schools during their student internship. This is a significant addition to our partnership with CSU in that it gives CSU students an opportunity to intern in a district outside Baltimore City and affords HCPS opportunities to support a more diverse pool of student interns. Educational research consistently

supports the fact that most interns accept professional opportunities in the district they complete their internship. This additional phase of our partnership with CSU is a strategic move forward.

NEW This year, we also entered a MOU with the University of Maryland Eastern Shore (UMES), School of Education to give opportunities for HCPS students to learn about and participate in their High School Teacher University. This program provides high school students, with a focus on male students of color, opportunities to learn about a career in education. This partnership affords students who may have missed the district's Teacher Academy of Maryland (TAM) deadlines to explore the merits of a career in education. Currently, HCPS students must identify their interest in TAM during their freshman or sophomore year, whereby the High School Teacher University through UMES focuses their recruitment efforts on juniors and seniors. During the Summer of 2023, a select group of male students of color participated in an orientation opportunity with UMES to gauge interest in the High School University Program. Additionally, to keep students engaged in the prospect of exploring education as a career, HCPS students were invited to UMES to attend a state-wide summit focused on recruiting and supporting male educators of color. HCPS sponsored eighteen middle and high school male students of color to attend the Summit. In addition to the Educator's Summit (Man the Shore Summit), students participated in a campus tour, received college apparel, and dined in the campus dining hall. Overall, this opportunity had an incredibly positive impact on our students and opened their eyes to the merits of a career in education as well as the potential value they bring to the field of education.

Overall, HCPS remains committed to equity in all aspects of staff recruitment, hiring, retention, and promotion, expanding outreach efforts across multiple states and attending numerous events sponsored by Historically Black Colleges and Universities and diversity-focused organizations. Through targeted strategies such as university partnerships, community-based events, and diversity recruitment programs, HCPS saw an increase in the diversity of new hires, particularly among teachers of color.

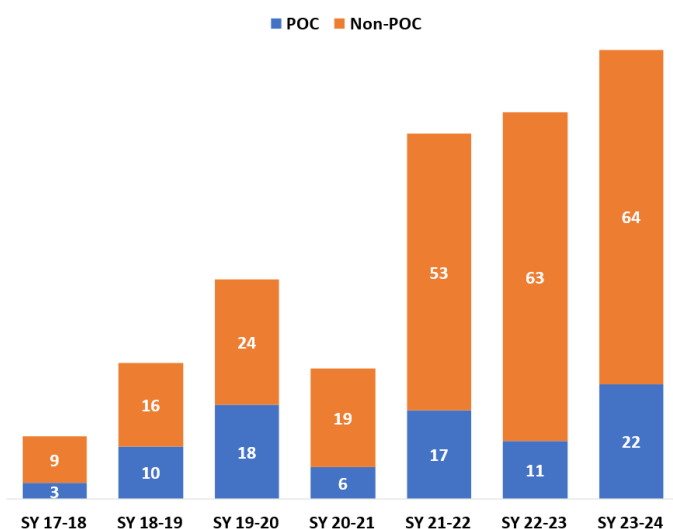
Conditional Teachers: HCPS has worked to promote the education profession to career changers through conditional certification largely through outreach to our current substitute pool as well as targeted social media advertising. This strategy has afforded us the opportunity to hire a larger pool of diverse teacher candidates which are supported by the Diversity Retention and Recruitment Specialist, our Curriculum and Instruction Office, and our Certification Department. While we saw an increase in conditional certifications, we also saw a rise in conditional contracts offered to persons of color.

Reference: [Handbook for Conditionally Certified Teachers 23-24](#)

To assist our educator's holding conditional certificates, HCPS has established a partnership with several colleges and universities to aid them in completing their certification requirements. The partnerships offer all coursework needed to acquire the standard certificate while also alleviating some financial pressure through our direct bill arrangements. We currently have partnerships with the following colleges and universities: Coppin State University; Goucher University; Harford Community College; Loyola University; Moreland University; Notre Dame of Maryland University, and the University of Phoenix.

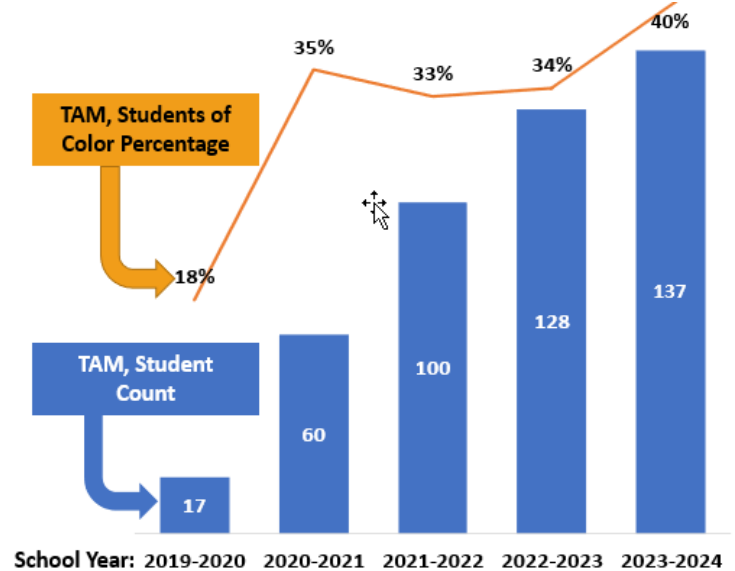
Additional support for conditional teachers includes Praxis test prep, covering costs to acquire Praxis study materials, and when needed, funds to provide content specific tutors are provided. Support from Instructional Coaches and the Office of Certification are provided to assist conditional teachers as they navigate the state testing and coursework requirements. New this year, HCPS hired retired English and

**Conditional Contracts Per School Year
By POC and Non-POC**



Math teachers to provide ongoing and job-embedded content support for conditionally certified teachers. These retired teachers, titled “Content Support Staff,” routinely meet with teachers to discuss curriculum implementation strategies, plan lessons to teach collaboratively, and discuss ways to meet individual student needs.

Grow-Your-Own: The HCPS Career Counseling Specialist, made possible by the Maryland Leads Grant, offers career counseling services to promote and encourage career learning and development within the HCPS system, empowering all employees to realize their potential and the opportunities that await them in HCPS. Career Counseling services are available to all HCPS employees. Since the inception of the position, our specialist has met with hundreds of employees including teachers, inclusion helpers, paraeducators, school counselors, school psychologists, and many other HCPS employees. All employees who desire to transition/advance their careers within HCPS are encouraged to take advantage of these resources: Internal Interview Preparation, Resume and Cover Letter Building, Confidential Career Coaching, HCPS Career/Transition Support, Exploring Undergraduate and Graduate Programs, and HCPS Job Search Support.



HCPS also continued our efforts to target diverse candidates into our two Grow Your Own Programs – Teacher Academy of Maryland (TAM) for students and Growing Exceptional Teachers for our support staff. The TAM program saw the following increase in students of color participation as pictured on the graph to the right.

***NEW* Ambassador Program:** Due to findings from a recently conducted Talent Pathways Needs Assessment, work is underway to establish an Ambassador Program in the district. The Ambassador Program will mobilize district educators of color to serve as recruitment and support leaders for potential candidates of color. In addition to supporting recruitment and outreach efforts, district ambassadors will provide ongoing touchpoints and mentorship for new staff of color. This form of peer-to-peer recruitment has been shown to increase morale and retention of staff. Another aspect of the Ambassador Program would invite Ambassadors to serve as hosts for school visits and provide a more diverse representation in district marketing materials including social media marketing.

Model Teacher Preparation Pilot Program: HCPS has made significant progress in implementation of a pilot model program to develop pathways to teaching from post-secondary students and current high school students. The 2022-2023 school year was spent planning a brick-and mortar school which is now delayed by two years. ***NEW*** As a result, the district implementation team pivoted to begin an implementation pilot at Roye Williams Elementary School (RWES). The implementation pilot is testing several strategies:

- **Mentor Development:** Training mentor teachers to support pre-service teachers (i.e., beginning teachers) to include coaching, understanding teacher development, and eliminating common barriers to persistence in the profession. Training includes Content instruction; Beginning Teacher Research; Problem-solving; Coaching Skill Development
- **Intern Cohort and Support:** Providing a cohorted support network on a single campus for fourth-year university pre-service teachers in their practicum, designed to provide developmentally appropriate content, pedagogical, and classroom process content knowledge and coaching, cultivate a network of peer support, and support autonomous problem-solving skills.

- **Hosted Pre-Service University Coursework:** RWES is serving as a satellite campus for Towson University (TU) junior teaching candidate coursework. A Towson instructor is providing an in-person English language learner course on the campus of RWES. In the 16-week university course, the teaching candidates will have approximately 5 weeks of continuous direction instruction on ELL theory and pedagogy, and transition to apply what they are learning in RWES first and fourth grade classrooms for the remaining 11 weeks of the semester.
- **High-School Student Reading Tutors:** HCPS is in the process of developing an apprenticeship pathway for high school students to reading tutors. High school students will have the opportunity to serve as reading tutors in designated elementary schools supporting teachers as they teach students to learn to read.

In the fall of 2023, approximately 25 teachers at RWES volunteered to be a part of this pilot to develop their skills as teacher leaders and leverage their learning to serve as mentors for a cohort of pre-service teacher interns in the spring. The teachers have had three synchronous and two asynchronous training sessions. The interns began in January of 2024 and will support sessions every other week through the end of their practicum experience. TU is working with HCPS to support the recruitment of diverse teacher candidates to this pilot. Currently, a third of the interns placed at RWE this school year represent historically underrepresented populations in the profession of teaching. The next step in implementing the model program strategies is expansion into a high school site.

HCPS has adapted to challenges to the design and development of its model school precipitated by a delay in school construction by beginning implementation of model program strategies within an existing school with a seasoned, veteran school leader. The veteran leader and her team have been instrumental in the success of this strategy and are seen as vital as the district begins to recruit a high school for a second pilot site. As a result of what has been learned so far with the pilot program, the district is recruiting the second site using the following criteria:

- **Executive Sponsorship:** A school leader who is innovative, committed to the profession of teaching and an ambassador for HCPS.
- **Strong Culture of Teaching and Learning:** A secondary school that embraces innovation and where a significant number of teachers are distinguished in the eyes of school leaders, district leadership, and beyond.
- **Multi-school Site:** A secondary school that is within walking distance or a short distance to feeder elementary and middle schools. We are also looking for a site where transportation can be eliminated as a barrier for high school students to participate in the opportunities to explore teaching on elementary and middle campuses.



Finally, the pathways implementation group has convened a smaller “implementation cohort” that is examining specific problems of practice through the lens of school-based staff. These problems of practice are aligned to the challenges of recruiting a diverse candidate pool to teaching and teacher-related careers in HCPS and opportunities for improvement that were identified in the needs assessment published in 2023. The use of school-based staff to examine these questions is designed to provide a fresh perspective, capitalize on the diverse talents of a broader set of leaders in HCPS, and identify barriers closer to implementation and impact.

References: [Talent Pathways Needs Assessment Report](#); [HCPS presents Talent Pathways update – Baltimore Sun](#); [HCPS Talent Pathways Overview, August 2023](#); [Model School Pilot Cohort Orientation Feedback 2.2024](#)

***NEW* Para-Professional Pathway:** In addition to pre-established pathways for paraeducators with IHE partners, the HCPS Talent Pathways implementation team, in partnership with TU, has developed a new pathway specifically for paraprofessionals transitioning to teaching with all expenses paid by a

scholarship from the Harford County Educators Association (HCEA) and a Get More Scholarship offered by the district. Marrying the two streams of support, HCPS is currently recruiting from its instructional assistants, who are among the most diverse group of staff in HCPS, to transition to teaching. The district and TU are proposing to support a cohort of between 5-10 candidates to apply, get accepted, and progress through the teacher preparation program in elementary education and/or special education.

***NEW* High School Education Apprentices:** HCPS has been able to expand high school apprentice programs in the district. These include facilities and finance. The next phase of apprenticeship opportunities is with elementary school tutors. The Career and Technical Education Director is working with the TAM and TAM+ students to pursue apprenticeships as reading tutors enabling students to engage in activities that explore teaching, earn credit, earn credentials, and provide a valuable service to other (younger) students in the district. The CTE department is currently recruiting potential apprentices and recruiting classrooms for apprenticeship placement. Approximately, 250 students in HCPS high schools are in either Early Childhood Education or Early Child Education (CDA) CTE programs. This represents a significant additional population of students who already have course work to set them up for successful early education apprenticeships and we will target communication to this group for our first apprentices.

***NEW* Elevating Educators Focus Group:** Beginning in January of 2024, the Co-Chairs of the Elevating Educators Committee conducted a comprehensive data collection process through focus groups or an email questionnaire. The purpose of was to find out from our educators what critical issues regarding Pillar 2 of the Blueprint are important to them. The Committees goals were to enhance two-way communication between district efforts and educators in schools. Ultimately, the data will be used for messaging efforts going forward. [Reference: Elevating Educators Data Collection 2024](#)

54 teachers were asked three questions: What do you know about Pillar 2 of the Blueprint? What do you want to know about Pillar 2 of the Blueprint? What elevates you most as an educator? 29 teachers chose to respond to the email questionnaire or participate in the focus groups. These teachers came from all parts of the district, representing elementary, middle, high, and virtual instruction. Further demographic data includes: 9 teachers have their National Board Certification, 4 were Teacher of the Year Top 5 candidates, 19 identified as female and 10 identified as men, and 2 are Instructional Coaches. These teachers have experience ranging from 6 -30 years.

In February of 2024, the raw data was brought to the Blueprint Elevating Educators Committee for data analysis. The trends revealed included: Teachers know that the goal of Pillar 2 is to recruit and retain high-quality, diverse teachers. They know that these efforts include a Career Ladder and relate to National Board Certification. However, they have many questions. They want to know more about the link between the Career Ladder and National Board. They want to know how the Career Ladder will directly impact them and their career choices. They want to know about the logistics in schools related to scheduling and leadership roles. They want to know about the budget for the Career Ladder and understand its sustainability. In terms of what elevates educators, they want to feel genuinely valued and appreciated. They want meaningful, timely professional development. They want to be included in decisions and they want to be paid fairly for their time and efforts. In March and April, members of the Elevating Educators Committee asked educators in their world the same three questions from the email questionnaire and the focus group. They discovered similar findings as the raw data from the initial study.

While HCPS made progress on our goals and strengthened our strategies there are still several challenges:

- Low attendance at job fairs – candidates can find a position without attending a fair and are often hired in the county in which they are interning before other counties have access to the candidates. This often occurs in counties where an HBCU is located. Harford County's closest HBCU is approximately forty minutes away. This distance also makes it difficult for HCPS to host interns from HBCU's because of the increased travel.

- Virtual diversity centered events often attract candidates who require Visa Sponsorship. HCPS does not have the resources and funding to support this sponsorship. This sponsorship also does not support retention efforts due to the limited time period a teacher can work within the program.
- The teaching workforce in Maryland has remained persistently white even as the student population has grown more diverse. Over the past 10 years, less than 30% of Maryland teachers were teachers of color, making it hard to attract teachers of color.
- Maryland Educator Programs do not produce enough teachers to fill the state's vacancies. Approximately 50% of Maryland certification applicants are prepared in another state. Moreover, Maryland Teacher Preparation program completers are mostly white.
Source: <https://title2.ed.gov/Public/Home.aspx>.
- Nationally, teachers of color have an 18.9% turnover rate, compared to 15% for their white peers according to the Institute for Research and Labor Employment. In Maryland, Black and Hispanic teachers are most likely to not return to teach in the state. We are seeing this in our own population, compounded by the additional stressor of those on a conditional certification working on obtaining certification while teaching.

VI. A High-Quality and Diverse Corps of School Leaders

NEW For the March 2024 submission, the LEA must also discuss how it recruits and hires a high-quality and diverse corps of school leaders, including its collaboration with institutions of higher education and other organizations to build leadership pipelines. Consider the potential impact of the Career Ladder and how the LEA will adapt its plans to address any challenges (e.g., National Board Certification for future school leaders, smaller candidate pools if teachers remain in classrooms, etc.).

Required Data Analysis: Through an analysis of data, discuss progress towards meeting the district's staffing needs and the Blueprint outcome of recruiting and hiring high-quality and diverse leaders.

Criteria for Success

- Describes a coherent and cohesive plan to recruit and hire high-quality and diverse school leaders, including an analysis of school leader demographics compared to the LEA's student population
- Includes examples of partnerships with educator preparation programs and/or institutions of higher education
- Leadership pipelines include strategies to recruit and support aspiring leaders in earning National Board Certification
- Discusses potential impact of the Career Ladder
- Analyzes and uses quantitative data (e.g., staffing data) to demonstrate progress towards recruiting and hiring a high-quality and diverse corps of school leaders

HCPS is committed to retaining and growing high-quality & diverse leaders.

Data Analysis: Based on the MSDE provided data spanning the years 2021 to 2023, it is evident that the total number of principals and assistant principals in the Harford County Public Schools has gradually increased. In 2021, there were 140 individuals holding these positions, which rose to 148 in 2022 and further to 150 in 2023. Regarding the racial and ethnic composition of these leadership roles, the majority of principals and assistant principals across all years were white, comprising around 85% to 87% of the total count. Specifically, white females consistently constituted the largest demographic within this group. While the representation of black principals and assistant principals remained relatively low compared to their white counterparts, there was a slight increase in their numbers over the three-year period, with 15 individuals in 2021, rising to 17 in 2022 and 2023. Similarly, the representation of Hispanic principals and assistant principals also saw a small increase over the years, with 1 to 2 individuals in each category. Furthermore, there were a few individuals categorized under "Other," making up a small percentage of the

total count, with consistent numbers across the three years. The Harford County Public Schools Office of Organizational Development has conducted a thorough review of race and ethnicity data concerning the leadership composition in both Elementary and Secondary Schools. We remain committed to exploring avenues for further improvement in our initiatives. [Reference: MSDE Data File Tab 6](#)

The HCPS provided data ([Reference: HCPS Leadership Development](#)) outlines projected retirement eligibility counts for various leadership positions within leadership positions from 2024 to 2029. Notably, a total of 99 individuals are anticipated to become eligible for retirement during this six-year period, indicating a substantial potential turnover within the organization's leadership cadre. Principals and Assistant Principals emerge with the highest retirement eligibility counts, with 34 and 23 individuals respectively, suggesting impending shifts in school leadership. Following closely, Supervisors and Assistant Supervisors present a combined count of 22 retirements, while Directors and Executive Directors are expected to experience 14 retirements. Although retirement eligibility counts for roles like Pupil Personnel Workers, Assistant Superintendents, and Other Central Office Administrators are comparatively lower, they still indicate potential changes in crucial administrative roles. These projections underscore the critical importance of robust succession planning and talent management strategies to ensure continuity and effective leadership during periods of transition. Presently, the Office of Organizational Development has established programs such as the Future U Academy to support succession planning and recruitment efforts, while initiatives like IMPACT provide essential support for new administrators. Furthermore, leveraging Internationally Certified Coaches offers staff vital support during transitional phases. Our overarching objectives are to concentrate on recruitment, retention, and effectively mitigate the challenges associated with transitional periods to uphold systemic effectiveness.

***NEW* Future U Aspiring Principals and Aspiring Assistant Principals:** In the spring of 2023, the Office of Organizational Development launched the Future U Academy for Aspiring Principals and Aspiring Assistant Principals. The primary objective of this academy was to provide aspiring leaders with a platform to develop and refine the requisite skills for assuming leadership roles within educational institutions. Additionally, the academy aimed to familiarize participants with administrative leadership roles through a series of 10 sessions focused on professional development and skill enhancement. Emphasizing inclusivity, HCPS employed an equity lens in the admission process, collaborating with the Office of Equity to ensure the presence of a diverse group of administrators who served as exemplary models. The academy included various topics including but not limited to: Strengths based leadership, creating a mindset for belonging, Budgeting basics, School Improvement, Interview Wisdom, and a Principal and Assistant Principal Panel. [Reference: HCPS Leadership Development](#)

During the initial launch, it became apparent that there was limited diversity among the candidates applying to Future U. In response, the Office of Organizational Development actively worked to implement strategies aimed at improvement. These initiatives included:

- Attending events hosted by the Office of Recruitment and Retention to enhance outreach efforts.
- Presenting at events to promote the purpose and upcoming dates of Future U for Fall 2024.
- Providing individual coaching sessions during the Spring 2024 HCPS Conference.
- Offering strengths coaching to individuals to support their professional development.

Building upon the feedback received from the Spring 2023 academy, Harford County Public Schools offered the Future U Academy for Aspiring Assistant Principals and Aspiring Principals again in Fall 2024, with additional sessions designed to address identified needs. These included:

- "Getting to the Interview Table": A session focused on helping candidates understand resumes and the interview process, presented by Human Resources.
- "Mock Interviews": Principals, Assistant Principals, and Supervisors from Harford County Public Schools participated in mock interviews with participants, providing on-the-spot feedback, peer feedback, and video review.

***NEW* Future U Teacher Leader Academy:** In Winter 2024, the Teacher Leader Academy was introduced as part of the Future U series, targeting K-12 teachers interested in assuming leadership roles within their schools. This academy covered various topics, including Identifying strengths, transitioning

from the classroom to school leadership, Ethics, and confidentiality, Coaching and feedback, Data collection, Courageous conversations, Equity, and bias, Facilitating a team, Adult learning theory, Human resources, Resume building, and Mock interviews. Similar to the Aspiring Administrators program, the initial Future U Teacher Leadership Academy faced challenges in attracting diverse applicants. Harford County Public Schools aims to collaborate with the Office of Equity and Recruitment and Retention to devise strategies for increasing diversity among participants by the conclusion of the academy.

***NEW* Future U Enterprise:** Looking ahead, the Office of Organizational Development is in the process of planning Future U Academy Enterprise, which will cater to leaders in Facilities, Transportation, Central Office, and Food and Nutrition. This initiative, requested at a Recruitment and Retention event, is scheduled for launch in Fall 2024. Human Resources conducts professional development for our Future U program. The learning focus of this session is as follows: Activities to prepare for their leadership journey, how to assess their own leadership readiness, how to have courageous conversations with leaders to assess to leadership readiness, how to prepare an application, how to prepare for an interview, and interview strategies.

Impact: First- and Second-Year Administrators participate in monthly Impact Meetings designed to cater to their individual needs. HCPS acknowledges the diverse range of experiences that each administrator brings to their leadership roles. These Impact Meetings serve as a platform to offer tailored support to administrators, meeting them at their current stage and facilitating their progression on their leadership journey. During these meetings, each new leader partners with a building-based coach who offers support tailored to their specific requirements. Additionally, the Supervisor of Leadership Development provides another layer of coaching and personalized professional learning to further enhance the development of these administrators.

Coaching and Collaboration: Harford County Public Schools collaborates with Anne Arundel Community College to offer Assistant Principals, Principals, and Teacher Leaders the chance to enroll in their Engagement Coaching program. Anne Arundel Community College stands out as the sole community college nationwide to possess an International Coaching Federation Accredited Coaching Program. Through this partnership, Harford County leaders can utilize Title II federal funding to partake in the first three courses of the program. To date, two official cohorts have engaged in this opportunity, resulting in over 45 staff members completing all three courses.

HCPS has MOUs in place with several Maryland universities (i.e., Towson, Goucher) who offer a graduate degree in School Leadership and includes cohort options as well as reduced tuition and direct billing. These options reduce barriers for our employees by making the degree more affordable. These opportunities are advertised multiple times a year through our systemwide newsletter, information events, and through direct connection with the certification office. [Reference: HCPS Grad Program Partners](#)

In addition, we are marketing the graduate level options for earning credit while pursuing National Board Certification and several of our current NBCT's teach courses for these programs, helping with recruitment and alignment.

***NEW* Building Leaders for the Career Ladder:** In order to support future teacher leaders in Level 4 of the Career Ladder, we are providing assistance through the Maryland Leads Grant with the application cost to our current Teacher Specialists and Instructional Coaches. Since these positions are similar to the Level 4 roles, they do not qualify for the scholarship through MSDE. We are removing this barrier to encourage our teacher leaders to pursue NBCT and, therefore, be poised to apply for these positions once the Career Ladder is fully implemented.

During the upcoming 2024-25 school year, HCPS will enhance the support our Instructional Coaches and Title I Teacher Specialists provide. To begin a transition to the Career Ladder Level 4 positions, these teacher leaders will be paired with new teachers with the greatest need, such as our conditionally certificated staff, to coteach a course of instruction. This effort is two-fold: to provide intensive modeling and support for our most struggling new teachers and high-quality instruction for our students in these

classes. This also provides HCPS an opportunity to determine the most effective models for Level 4 teacher leaders as we begin phasing in the Career Ladder. **Reference:** [Instructional Coaching Model; Instructional Coach data charts](#)

Also new to our leadership work, in February of 2024 HCPS created a workgroup of Teacher Specialists and Instructional Coaches to begin the visioning needed to build the roles to align with the Blueprint where our teacher leaders support both teacher development and student academic progress.

The Instructional Coach work group brainstormed ways to incorporate a consistent classroom-based teaching responsibility while maintaining flexibility to meet the vast needs of teachers on their caseload. Many of our Instructional Coaches serve multiple buildings, making it challenging to commit to a consistent teaching period across the week. This group used a target of 20% - 50% teaching time and worked to create possible schedules that would meet this requirement. The team drafted several schedules by level to create options based on the needs of the Instructional Coach's caseload of nontenured teachers, including co-teaching models and teaching a course to serve as a Model Classroom. To support coaches having dedicated co-teaching time, HCPS is investigating coaching software to aid in supporting many teachers with virtual tools, A.I. analysis, and streamlined communication. This is a critical juncture to both build our leaders for the Career Ladder, but also root the work in positive student outcomes. **Reference:** [Sample Teacher Leader Schedules](#)

The Teacher Specialist Workgroup included specialists with a concentrated focus on math, literacy, early childhood, supplemental instruction, or Title I. The group evaluated their teaching schedules and identified opportunities to increase time co-teaching and co-planning with non-tenured teachers within their individual school. The goal was to achieve a 50% teaching time target while effectively managing their other job responsibilities. After careful consideration, the team developed several sample schedules for both elementary and secondary specialists to use as a guide and pilot for the upcoming school year. **Reference:** [Sample Teacher Leader Schedules](#)

Leadership Recognition: This year marks the 30th Annual Celebration honoring Harford County Public School Educators through the Teacher of the Year Program. ***NEW*** To enrich this celebration and recognize the vital contributions of our Principals and Assistant Principals, they will be incorporated into the event. On April 9, 2024, we will introduce the inaugural HCPS Principal and Assistant Principal of the Year. The initiative to include a Principal and Assistant Principal of the Year in the Celebration of Excellence was spearheaded by the Customer Service Team. Several factors influenced this decision, including alignment with state recognition programs, similar programs in other Maryland counties, and enhancing the climate and culture of HCPS. Subsequently, a dedicated committee was formed, comprising Principals, Assistant Principals, and Directors. This committee developed the framework and procedures for the program and sought sponsorships to support the finalists. Throughout the process, close consultation and alignment were maintained with the Teacher of the Year program and the processes of the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) and the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP). This year's selection process for Principal and Assistant Principal of the Year will involve nominations, applications, and interviews. We eagerly anticipate celebrating our winners and collaborating with all finalists to refine our procedures and cultivate a cohesive team that embodies the values of HCPS.

VII. National Board Certification

Initial Blueprint Implementation Plan Reference: Questions 37-44, 48, and 51

In March 2023, the LEA described its plans to recruit and support diverse candidates through the successful completion of National Board Certification or advanced degrees (if NBC is not available) to be eligible for the designation of Lead Teacher within the Career Ladder. Based on implementation of the LEA's plans over the last year, discuss the district's progress in transforming its systems and practices and achieving the intended outcomes of the Blueprint. Responses must address the following questions.

- What progress has been made in implementation related to both planned activities and anticipated outcomes? If progress has been limited, what challenges has the LEA encountered? Consider, identify, and refer to available data as needed to demonstrate progress.
- How is the LEA adapting its plans to mitigate challenges and/or ensure continued progress and future success? Which strategies are not working that the LEA will no longer implement, and which new strategies does the LEA intend to implement? Include the rationale for adjustments.
- **Required Data Analysis:** Through an analysis of data, discuss progress towards meeting the Blueprint outcome to recruit and support diverse candidates pursuing and achieving National Board Certification or advanced degrees (if NBC is not available).



Criteria for Success

- Identifies highest priority areas and/or strategies discussed in the March 2023 submission and provides detailed updates related to progress, including identifying challenges where progress has been limited
- Identifies and provides the rationale for new/revised strategies, activities, and/or outcomes that have been developed or revised since the 2023 submission
- Discusses how specific feedback provided for the 2023 submission has been addressed if applicable
- Analyzes and uses quantitative data to demonstrate progress towards recruiting and supporting diverse candidates pursuing and achieving National Board Certification or advanced degrees (if NBC is not available)

HCPS is committed to supporting NBCT and the advancement of all teachers.

HCPS has made significant strides in achieving its goals outlined in the 2023 submission, particularly in advancing the National Board Certification (NBCT) program. The number of Nationally Board-Certified Teachers increased from 110 in 2022 to 152 in 2023, showcasing a notable enhancement in teacher expertise and professionalism. Moreover, there was a substantial rise in candidates pursuing NBCT, soaring from 36 candidates in 2022 to an impressive 153 in 2023, with a deliberate effort to engage candidates from lower-performing schools, ensuring a more inclusive and diverse cohort. **Reference:** [MSDE Data File Tab 7a, 7b](#)

To support the growing number of NBCT candidates, HCPS invested in recruiting and training NBCT support providers, expanding the facilitator team from 3 to 12 individuals. Monthly facilitator training sessions were implemented, covering crucial topics such as curriculum, coaching, and problem-solving, enhancing the quality of support provided to candidates. Additionally, the National Board candidate support opportunities were expanded, offering both face-to-face and virtual options tailored to candidates' preferences, including evening and Saturday sessions to accommodate diverse schedules. ***NEW*** To support portfolio development, HCPS is investigating coaching software to aid in teachers pursuing NBC with virtual tools, A.I. analysis, and mentor feedback.

Acknowledging the challenge of providing feedback to an increased number of candidates, HCPS revamped its Reader Process, enlarging the cohort from 10+ readers to 50+, and introducing an automatic matching system within Canvas, the HCPS Learning Management System, for efficient entry feedback. Clear communication systems were established, with a dedicated inbox monitored by 5 individuals and a discussion board on the Canvas site accessible to all 12 facilitators, ensuring timely responses to candidates' inquiries and concerns.

Administrative tasks related to recruitment, tracking, and achievement were streamlined through the implementation of additional spreadsheets and utilization of Forms/Canvas assignments, improving information collection, and sharing effectiveness. To entice new candidates, HCPS deployed marketing

strategies such as recruitment posters at school sites, personal invitations to school leaders to nominate candidates, and recognitions for newly achieving NBCTs, fostering a supportive environment conducive to certification pursuit.

Furthermore, the Maryland Leads Grant allowed HCPS a partnership with RTI Consulting, which was instrumental in the growth and refinement of HCPS's candidate support program. Weekly meetings and monthly facilitator support sessions facilitated collaboration and feedback exchange between HCPS and RTI, ensuring alignment with program goals and initiatives. RTI's development of materials, resources, and uniquely tailored Canvas modules further bolstered HCPS's NBCT program, enhancing the overall support system for candidates.

Despite progress, HCPS faces ongoing challenges, particularly in attracting diverse candidates and teachers from lower-performing schools to pursue National Board Certification (NBCT). With only one NBCT who is an African American female (out of 86 teachers eligible), HCPS recognizes the need to enhance efforts to foster diversity in its NBCT program. To address this, HCPS is including funding the Specialist application fee for partnerships with teachers in lower-performing schools, increasing support options and flexibility, promoting school-based cohorts, extending personal invitations to potential diverse candidates, and collaborating with equity and diversity-focused personnel to encourage teachers of color to pursue certification. The following data reflects our current focus and progress related to NBCT in our schools with unique designations and unique needs above and beyond the Blueprint low-performing schools. **References:** [Unique School Designations](#); [MSDE Data File Tab 7a, 7b](#)

Fall 2023 Data. New NBC Data is released at the end of 2023.

NBCT Data

	Title 1	Community School	Priority School	FARMS	NBCT	NBCT-Pursuit	NBCT-Transfer
DISTRICT-WIDE	9	11	9	37.59%	110 <small>(27 at 50%+ FARMS)</small>	214 <small>(76 at 50%+ FARMS)</small>	0
Aberdeen High			X	50.67%	4	8	-
Aberdeen Middle		<i>(CS in FY25)</i>	X	61.35%	1	9	0
Bakerfield Elementary	X	X		69.81%	2	1	-
Church Creek Elem			X	55.70%	1	0	-
Deerfield Elementary	X	X		76.28%	0	4	-
Edgewood Elementary	X	X		81.31%	1	1	-
Edgewood High		<i>(CS in FY25)</i>	X	60.55%	9	14	0
Edgewood Middle		X	X	71.06%	1	4	0
George D. Lisby Elem	X	X		71.06%	0	2	-
Hall's Cross Roads Elem	X	X		88.24%	2	4	-
Havre de Grace Elem		<i>(CS in FY25)</i>	X	54.80%	1	5	-
Joppatowne Elementary	X	<i>(CS in FY25)</i>		64.92%	1	4	-
Joppatowne High School		X	X	72.03%	1	4	0
Magnolia Elementary	X	X		84.94%	2	7	0
Magnolia Middle		X	X	75.17%	0	3	0
Old Post Road Elementary	X	X		77.78%	0	3	-
Riverside Elementary	X	X		66.92%	0	2	-
Roye-Williams Elementary			X	50.61%	1	1	-

GREEN ROW = Current Blueprint Low Performing School with \$7,000 NBCT Increase
BLUE ROW = Former Blueprint Low Performing School with past NBCT Increase

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Additionally, while some school administrators support opportunities for NBCT candidates to meet during the school day, HCPS is striving to expand the number of school-based cohorts to provide additional support and foster greater collegiality throughout the certification process. However, a pressing concern arises from the reliance on funding from the MARYLAND Leads grant to compensate the 12 NBCT Candidate Support Facilitators, with no identified funding source once the grant ends later this year. As Maryland transitions career pathways through NBCT, there is an urgent need for a coordinated effort within the district to sustain and expand the NBCT program, necessitating the establishment of a dedicated position to oversee coordination and support facilitation, alongside the increasing demand for candidate support facilitators and readers.

In summary, while keeping an eye on challenges, HCPS's dedication to advancing the NBCT program led to tangible outcomes, with increased certification rates, expanded candidate support, and enhanced administrative processes, reflecting a commitment to excellence and inclusivity in teacher professional development. **References:** [HCPS NBC Facilitator Design Session 2.2024](#); [NBC Support Reader Process-Canvas Snapshot](#); [NBC Candidate Recruitment Session 12.2023](#); [NBCT Specialist Info Session](#)

VIII. Cultivating and Managing Effective Partnerships

NEW How does the LEA cultivate and manage its partnerships with institutions of higher education (IHE) and educator preparation programs (EPP) to ensure the needs of all organizations are met? Consider the challenges associated with the current labor market and the individual mission and goals of each partner. Discuss how the LEA works with its partners to build relationships and adapt each organization's systems and practices to achieve shared goals. Considerations:

- Teacher candidate placement and experiences
- Teacher induction and mentorship programs
- Talent pipelines, including alternative pathways to certification and professional development
- Advanced degree programs (e.g., in support of dual enrollment expansion, critical needs areas, etc.)
- Developing and implementing Post College and Career Readiness (CCR) pathways and CCR Support pathway
- Regular communication and feedback between LEA and IHE/EPP leadership to strengthen programs and systems

Criteria for Success

- Describes a cohesive and coherent plan that addresses all considerations provided to partner successfully with educator preparation programs and institutions of higher education
- Identifies specific challenges and associated strategies to overcome challenges
- Discusses how it collaborates with partners to meet the needs and goals of all organizations

HCPS has several robust and critical partnerships with IHEs.

The Supervisor of Teacher Preparation & Professional Development plays a vital role as the liaison between the University and the school system, facilitating all aspects of teacher preparation field experiences and internships. Through the development of Memorandums of Understanding, clear delineations of roles and responsibilities are established between the Institution of Higher Education (IHE) and the school system, ensuring smooth collaboration. Mentor selection is meticulously conducted, with emphasis placed on teacher effectiveness, leadership skills, and willingness to support aspiring educators, resulting in well-matched mentor-intern pairs.

Intern placement is methodically managed, with requests and requirements carefully considered to align with certification, content, location, and other pertinent factors. Ongoing communication between the IHE Placement Coordinator, Mentor Teacher, and HCPS Supervisor fosters meaningful and effective placement experiences, maximizing the learning opportunities for interns. ***NEW*** Spearheading an innovative teacher development model, the HCPS Model School pilot at Roye Williams elementary School pioneers a cohort of preservice interns supported by trained mentors, offering networking and professional learning opportunities tailored to the HCPS profile of a successful teacher. **References:** [Model School Pilot Cohort Orientation Feedback 2.2024](#)



Furthermore, the Professional Learning office enriches mentor skills through teacher leadership opportunities, enhancing their abilities in working with adult learners through learning-focused conversations, active listening, data collection, and feedback provision. To ensure partnership schools are

fully committed to welcoming and supporting aspiring educators, school leaders undergo a rigorous IHE Partnership Application process, demonstrating their dedication to fostering a culture of continuous learning and growth, and providing highly qualified mentors for interns, including those seeking teacher leadership roles. These applications are reviewed collaboratively by district leaders and university partners, strengthening District-IHE partnerships for enhanced teacher preparation and development.

The Supervisor of Teacher Preparation & Professional Development participates in the Professional Development School (PDS) Collaborative with Towson University who is our largest partner for teacher preparation. Consistently, they provide more than 80% of students with clinical experiences in HCPS. As part of this collaborative, we review internship data (i.e., edTPA performance and Year 1 teaching success), provide feedback for improving the program and aligning coursework to current teacher expectations, and collaborate to problem-solve concerns and challenges. This partnership has been integral in developing a constructive, two-way partnership with our largest University partner.

References: [HCPS TU PDS Collaboration 2-27-24](#); [TU District Data Retreat 2023](#)

As mentioned in the 2023 Blueprint Plan, HCPS has significant barriers to the recruitment and selection of traditionally certified teachers. Except for the Towson University's satellite campus (TUNE Center) at Harford Community College, there are no brick-and-mortar four-year institutions of higher education within the borders of the district. This means that many of the teacher candidates that are from Harford County pursue college programs outside of the district and often stay in those districts to pursue teaching. Additionally, the TUNE center only hosts elementary education and special education certificate programs making the recruitment of highly qualified and certified secondary candidates difficult.

Despite challenges, HCPS has been able to begin each of the last several school years fully staffed, but with a dramatic increase in conditional teachers year over year. **HCPS boasts relationships with over 30 Institutes of Higher Education (IHE)** to facilitate the pursuit of certification for conditional/provisional teachers. Harford County provides tuition reimbursement for teachers to achieve full certification.

HCPS values and looks for innovative ways to partner with institutions of higher education:

NEW HCPS has taken significant steps this school year to deepen the relationship with TU to pilot the model program at RWES and to develop a paraprofessional pathway to teaching with current HCPS paraprofessionals. This relationship is beneficial to building a more robust pathway for educator candidates and provides a unique pre-service training experience for undergraduate teacher candidates. Pre-service training may begin as early as junior year, with the Standards for Healthy Outcomes from Positive Experiences (H.O.P.E.) of sophomore and freshman years soon as additional course sections can be appropriately housed on the model school campus(es). A teacher preparation program where students have teaching experiences with students earlier in their undergraduate study supports TU goals and is designed to improve the 5-year retention rate of beginning teachers in Harford County.

References: [Model School Pilot Cohort Orientation Feedback 2.2024](#)

NEW HCPS is also pursuing an additional IHE relationship with HBCU Coppin State University to support expansion of the model school strategy. Coppin has a much smaller class of education graduates. The goal of this partnership is to benefit the pre-service teacher development strategy (model program) and potentially increase a pathway of high school students from Harford County to Coppin State's education program to return to work back at home. This creates a larger pool of prospective undergraduate teachers from Harford County to Coppin and back to Harford County upon graduation.

And we know that not all individuals who find their way to the classroom take the traditional route by obtaining a degree in education. ***NEW*** HCPS signed an MOU with Johns Hopkins University this Spring for a program that will allow career changers to obtain their master's degree free of charge with the commitment to teach at HCPS for a minimum of four years. **Reference:** [JHU TeachingWell MOU Final](#)

The Human Resources Team plays a crucial role in supporting the efforts of partnership creation and cultivation within HCPS through various initiatives. They actively engage with cohorts of HCPS interns, providing insights into the benefits of working with HCPS, sharing organizational goals, and elucidating the hiring process. Moreover, candidates are afforded the opportunity to visit HCPS schools, interact with

teachers, and immerse themselves in the diverse educational landscape of the county. To streamline the hiring process, the team facilitates advanced hiring options for candidates, granting them the freedom to choose their preferred placement. They play a pivotal role in supporting the teacher induction program, serving as a readily available resource for new teachers navigating their initial stages within the district. Additionally, the team actively advertises alternative pathways to certification, providing candidates with diverse avenues to enter the teaching profession. The Human Resources Team also serves as a valuable resource for students who have graduated from the Teacher Academy of Maryland, offering guidance and support as they transition into their teaching careers. Furthermore, they engage in regular outreach efforts to institutes of higher education, strengthening recruitment opportunities and fostering collaborative partnerships to ensure a robust pipeline of talented educators for HCPS.

To assist our educator's holding conditional certificates HCPS has established a partnership with several colleges and universities to aid them in completing their certification requirements. The partnerships offer all coursework needed to acquire the standard certificate while also alleviating some of the financial pressure through our direct bill arrangements. We currently have partnerships with the following colleges and universities: Coppin State University; Goucher University; Harford Community College; Loyola University; Moreland University; Notre Dame; and Maryland University. Additional supports for conditional teachers include: support for Praxis test taking, financial support for test books and paying for tutors if needed; support from Instructional Coaches; guidance from Certification Office regarding specific tests and coursework; and the Certification Office provides a conditional handbook. **Reference:** [HCPS Grad Program Partners](#)

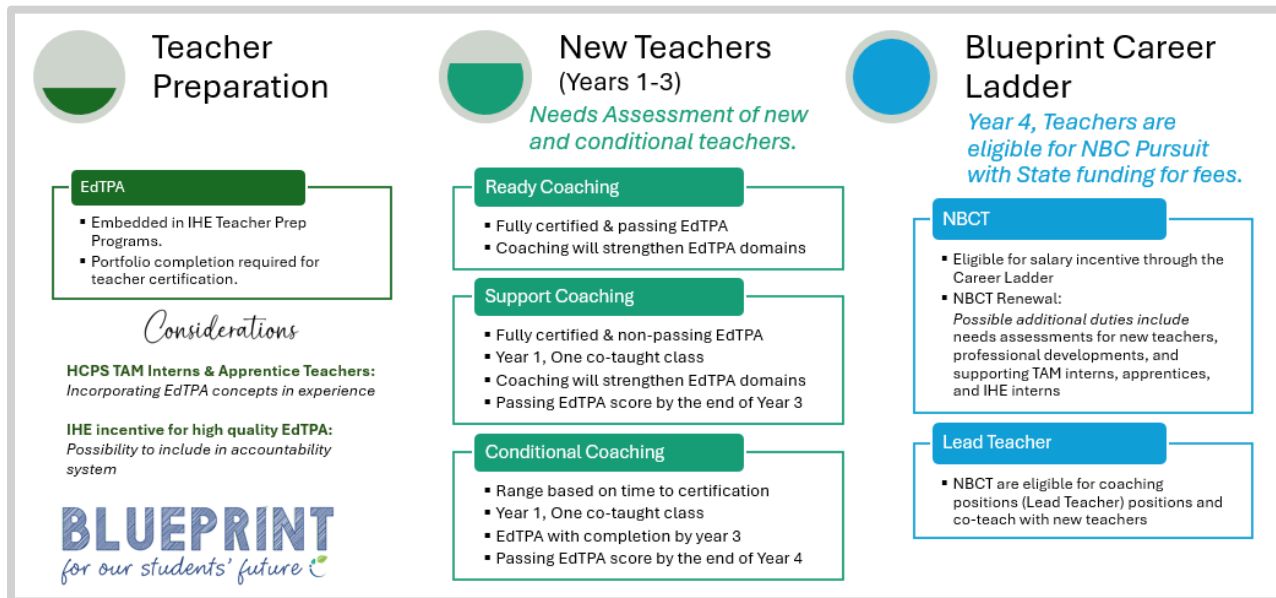
As detailed in question 10, the Diversity Retention and Recruitment Specialist supports the retention and recruitment of teachers and staff from underrepresented groups, with a focus on expanding partnerships with HBCUs. ***NEW*** This year, two MOUs were established with Coppin State University (CSU), aimed at providing support for conditionally certified teachers and facilitating student intern placements in HCPS schools. Another MOU with the University of Maryland Eastern Shore (UMES) offers opportunities for HCPS students to participate in the High School Teacher University program, targeting male students of color. HCPS also sponsored 18 students to attend an Educator's Summit at UMES.

Teacher Induction: HCPS has a robust Teacher Induction program for all certificated staff in their first three years. Twenty-seven full-time Instructional Coaches provide support to identified teachers including those who are non-tenured, those who are new to their content area, those who have been placed on a Plan for Professional Growth (PPG), and those identified by Principals and/or Content Supervisors based on observed professional practice needs. Instructional Coaches are deployed across the 55 schools based on: the percentage of staff non-tenured, new to content and/or building, and/or on a professional plan of growth; and achievement gaps among student groups.

First year educators to HCPS receive systemwide professional development through a 4-day New Hire Orientation that supports a community of learners, introduction to content curriculum, evidence-informed instructional strategies, and resources available to them. In addition, conditionally certified teachers receive an additional day of learning to address their specific needs related to establishing a classroom and obtaining certification.

The Instructional Coaches and other Teacher Specialists provide job-embedded support to nontenured and other identified teachers through demonstration lessons, co-teaching, co-planning, data collection, reflective conversations, visits to master teachers' classrooms, and other identified best practices. They approach this work from a Coaching standpoint, employing cognitive coaching strategies, by thinking aloud, through providing multiple models and choice, and by encouraging teachers to identify their goals. Coaches meet monthly to develop their own professional skills and collaborate around problems of practice. Survey data from new hire orientation, mid-year, and end-of-year show an overwhelming percentage of staff who indicate the Induction experiences are helpful and identify the Instructional Coach as the most significant support to their effectiveness and retention. **References:** [Instructional Coaching Model](#); [New Teacher Content Visits](#); [New Teacher Orientation Agenda Aug.2023](#)

NEW HCPS is actively engaged in envisioning the work with our IHE partners to embed EdTPA and NBC portfolio frameworks in our induction model. Furthermore, to support instructional coaches on EdTPA portfolio requirements, HCPS is investigating coaching software to aid in supporting many teachers with virtual tools, A.I. analysis (including EdTPA requirements), and streamlined communication. The following graphic represents a theorized model that considers the possibility that portfolio assessments are completed, but not yet achieved a passing score at the time of induction.



IX. Educator Compensation

Initial Blueprint Implementation Plan Reference: Questions 52 and 54

In March 2023, the LEA discussed how it intended to meet the requirements set forth in the Blueprint to improve teacher compensation. The LEA's response was to ensure that teachers receive a minimum starting salary of \$60,000 by July 1, 2026. Based on implementation of the LEA's plans over the last year, discuss the district's progress in transforming its systems and practices and achieving the intended outcomes of the Blueprint. Responses must address the following questions.

- What progress has been made in implementation related to both planned activities and anticipated outcomes? If progress has been limited, what challenges has the LEA encountered? Consider, identify, and refer to available data as needed to demonstrate progress.
- How is the LEA adapting its plans to mitigate challenges and/or ensure continued progress and future success? Which strategies are not working that the LEA will no longer implement, and which new strategies does the LEA intend to implement? Include the rationale for adjustments.
- **Required Data Analysis:** Through an analysis of data, discuss progress towards meeting the Blueprint outcome to ensure teachers receive a minimum starting salary of \$60,000 by July 1, 2026.

Criteria for Success

- Identifies highest priority areas and/or strategies discussed in the March 2023 submission and provides detailed updates related to progress, including identifying challenges where progress has been limited
- Identifies and provides the rationale for new/revised strategies, activities, and/or outcomes that have been developed or revised since the 2023 submission
- Discusses how specific feedback provided for the 2023 submission has been addressed if applicable
- Indicates the LEA will meet the Blueprint outcome of teachers receiving a minimum starting salary of \$60,000 by July 1, 2026

HCPS will meet the requirements for minimum teacher starting salaries.

Local funding sources for the FY24-25 school year have yet to be finalized, but HCPS is still on target to meet the required \$60,000 minimum starting salary by July 1, 2026. Our Human Resources Office continues to work in close collaboration with our Board of Education and Business Services Office to ensure we remain on target to meet this Blueprint requirement. The chart below shows how we intend to achieve the required \$60,000 starting salary by July 1, 2026. [Reference: MSDE Data File Tab 9](#)

We need to average 2.45% each year for three years				
Fiscal Year Begins	July 1 Starting Salary	Percentage Increase	Dollar Increase	July 1 Starting Salary
July 1, 2024	55,821	2.45%	1,368	57,189
July 1, 2025	57,189	2.45%	1,401	58,590
July 1, 2026	58,590	2.45%	1,435	60,025

NOTE: The above chart is based on anticipated increases, but the budget process for 2024-2025 will not conclude until after the submission of this plan. Actual amounts may be impacted by final budget results.

An on-going challenge related to the \$60,000 requirement will be in the area of recruitment. Our biggest competitor locally for teacher candidates recently made an aggressive move as it relates to minimum teacher salary. This neighboring district will hit the \$60,000+ salary as early as July 1, 2024. We anticipate that it will only continue to grow well beyond the \$60,000 prior to July 1, 2026, which will put HCPS behind from a competitive perspective.

We continue to face challenges related to State funding being tied to the definition of teacher for our NBC holders. Our school counselors and secondary media employees and the support they provide our students each day is vital to the system. These educators do not meet the definition of teacher and the State does not provide funding for NBC related incentives. This creates inequities between coworkers who hold their NBC. However, a few other LEAs, through local funding, have been able to provide salary increases for their NBC holders who do not meet the definition of teacher, making it even harder for us to recruit and retain NBC teachers who can cross county lines to earn more money each year while also building a larger pension benefit in their retirement.

Yet another challenge, while we had an increase in number of employees achieving their NBC this December, we still do not have enough NBC teachers to fill the leadership roles outlined in the career ladder framework. [Reference: MSDE Data File Tab 7a, 7b](#). Until that point, we have leaders who tackle this important work each day but do not hold their NBC and do not realize the same salary and pension enhancements for the same work. As detailed in question 12, HCPS is working diligently to grow our number of NBC candidates who serve in leadership positions through the Maryland Leads grant funding and is working directly with teacher leaders on visioning how these current roles will fit into the career ladder framework.



Lastly, our negotiations with our Teacher's Association are difficult because of our funding constraints and our inability to provide financial incentives beyond the Blueprint mandates to our employees. Differentiated pay or financial incentives for certain groups continues to be a challenge. HCPS sees great potential in a career ladder embedded with various qualifications, models of differentiated pay to support teachers in many challenging roles, and in improving our staffing stability at low-performing schools but we must work through negotiations with both our union and local funding authority to realize this potential. With funding, ideally HCPS would work towards also incentivizing critical needs such as special education certificated staff working with special education students, literacy qualifications for elementary staff, working in Title 1 schools or those with high concentrations of poverty, and/or retention in low-performing schools.

PILLAR 3

X. College and Career Readiness for English Language Arts

Initial Blueprint Implementation Plan Reference: Questions 57-76 and 81

In March 2023, the LEA described how it would ensure all Pre-K-5 students are proficient in reading by the end of 3rd grade and on the path to becoming college and career ready in English language arts. Based on implementation of the LEA's plans over the last year, discuss the district's progress in transforming its systems and practices and achieving the intended outcomes of the Blueprint. Responses must address the following questions.

- What progress has been made in implementation related to both planned activities and anticipated outcomes? If progress has been limited, what challenges has the LEA encountered? Consider, identify, and refer to available data as needed to demonstrate progress.
- How is the LEA adapting its plans to mitigate challenges and/or ensure continued progress and future success? Which strategies are not working that the LEA will no longer implement, and which new strategies does the LEA intend to implement? Include the rationale for adjustments.
- **Required Data Analysis:** Through an analysis of data, discuss progress towards meeting the Blueprint Outcome ensuring all students are proficient in reading by the end of 3rd grade and on the path to becoming college and career ready in English language arts.
- **Note:** LEAs must submit their final Pre-K-12 comprehensive literacy plans in alignment with the science of reading by June 28, 2024.

Criteria for Success

- Identifies highest priority areas and/or strategies discussed in the March 2023 submission and provides detailed updates related to progress, including identifying challenges where progress has been limited.
- Identifies and provides the rationale for new/revised strategies, activities, and/or outcomes that have been developed or revised since the 2023 submission.
- Discusses how specific feedback provided for the 2023 submission has been addressed, if applicable.
- Provides analysis of ELA data to identify trends in achievement and lack of achievement, including disaggregated by student groups, and describes instructional changes to improve achievement and how progress will be monitored for students' academic achievement in literacy in grades Pre-K-3.

HCPS Pre-K – 3 English Language Arts aligns with the Science of Reading.

In the 2023-2024 academic year, HCPS embarked on a comprehensive effort to enhance early literacy instruction through strategic partnerships and targeted professional development aligned with the Science of Reading (SOR). Collaborating with organizations like the Really Great Reading Company and Lexia, HCPS ensured K-3 educators received evidence-based training, leveraging approved partners identified in the Maryland Leads grant. These initiatives included workshops, conferences, and specialized cohorts, such as the LETRS program for Title 1 schools, aimed at deepening educators' understanding of SOR principles. Through ongoing support sessions and adaptation to evolving needs, HCPS demonstrates a commitment to fostering literacy excellence and optimizing student success. The following chart summarizes HCPS progress and adaptations regarding the initial HCPS Blueprint Implementation Plan.



2022 2023 Plan	Progress and Adaptations related to Original Plan as of January 2024
Canvas Course	<p>In 2023-2024, HCPS adapted its plan to ensure all K-3 teachers received training aligned with the Science of Reading. In place of a district created Canvas course, HCPS formed a partnership with Really Great Reading Company to provide training on the Science of Reading to all K-3 teachers in the district. This company was chosen because it was listed as an approved partner in the Maryland LEADS grant. The contract included a two-part training course lasting six hours total. The first training was held on Friday, November 3, 2023. The second training course was held on Monday, March 25. All K-3 teachers, special educators and paraeducators were required to attend this training so that, as a district, we could ensure all teachers received training on evidence based early literacy instruction. Really Great Reading Company provided the district with an attendance and engagement report. The partnership will continue with the offering of a two-day Science of Reading Conference. This will be offered to teachers June 17-18, 2024, and will be delivered by the company with keynote sessions and break-out sessions all aligned to the Science of Reading. We are excited that keynote topics align to the current MSDE Comprehensive Plan with sessions entitled, “Bringing the Science of Reading Home and Engaging Families” and “Best Practices for Multilingual Learners.” Over 100 teachers will be able to register and attend this in-person institute.</p> <p>HCPS has partnered with Lexia to provide Science of Reading training in LETRS. There is currently a 40-teacher cohort enrolled in LETRS throughout our Title 1 schools. In addition, two cohorts began in March 2024 and go through October 2024. HCPS will be able to train 80 participants across these cohorts for extensive professional development in SOR.</p> <p>Regarding Science of Reading training from Really Great Reading Company, HCPS believes on-going, job-embedded professional learning is essential to teacher understanding and implementation of best practices related to the Science of Reading. This includes training for school-based reading specialists throughout the year at eight meetings related to the Science of Reading so that their work with teachers at the school level reflects current research. It also includes professional learning from district-based literacy specialists for individual schools that involves a variety of delivery models including content learning, demonstration lessons, co-teaching opportunities, teacher coaching, and other interactive delivery models of professional learning to ensure hands-on, practical training for teachers aligned with adult learning theory.</p>
All K-2 teachers: DIBELS & Heggerty	<p>In alignment with the 2022-2023 plan, all K-2 teachers who had not previously completed the 8-hour DIBELS training were required to do so prior to administering the assessment. The vendor, Amplify, supplies certificates and course completion requirements for the district. Teachers new to Pre-K – 2nd grade have received training on phonological awareness from the Heggerty Company.</p>
Early reading screening data to match students to an intervention program	<p>HCPS scheduled yearly district-level training sessions for the intervention programs, Wilson Reading, SIPPS, and OG+, and to ensure staff new to these programs receive the necessary support for successful implementation of the program. HCPS is offering an additional OG+ Cohort for 30 educators in June 2024. This training will be 60 hours of learning from the Bowman Company aligned to the program and will expand the number of educators we currently have certified in this highly systematic, multisensory approach.</p>

References: [Science of Reading Workshop Sample](#); [Ready to Read State Report Collection 23-24](#); [Science of Reading Summer Institute](#)

2022 2023 Plan	Progress and Adaptations related to Original Plan as of January 2024
New teacher and grade level changing teachers – Science of Reading Training	This element has been partially implemented. Since the training on Science of Reading was held this year, we did not need reading specialists to provide specific lists of teachers who moved from an upper intermediate grade (fourth and fifth) to grades Pre-Kindergarten through third grade for the purposes of Science of Reading training. However, teachers who did move to Pre-Kindergarten through third grade from other grades were identified by reading specialists for additional training related to the Heggerty Phonological Awareness Program and the DIBELS assessment. The Heggerty training was held by the company on September 1, 2023, and included information related to the phonological awareness continuum, the relationships phonological awareness has on later development of word
Walkthroughs coordinated by the Reading, English, Language Arts Office (RELA) and the Office of Accountability.	These walkthroughs have continued in the 2023-2024 school year. By the conclusion of the 23-24 school year, all elementary schools will have been visited twice with a team from the RELA Office and Office of Accountability. The instructional dialogues/debrief sessions have been an effective approach to sharing instructional strengths and needs of the school and planning any targeted follow-up support that is necessary.
Focus groups - implementation of the current literacy program development	
The Shaffer Group - evaluation	This contract expired at the end of the 2022-2023 school year. HCPS is in the process of contracting with a different outside company to evaluate its literacy plans.
Regular collaborative planning, professional development, teacher evaluation, and reading specialist roles.	Schools continue to schedule regular collaborative planning sessions. Reading and Literacy Specialists continue to provide targeted professional development to teachers. School-based Reading/Literacy Specialists provide demonstration lessons, co-teaching, and instructional coaching (including coaching cycles). The number of Reading Specialists and Title I Literacy Specialists has remained
Three positions identified to support the science of reading.	The positions have remained during the 2023-2024 school year. These individuals continue to provide the training described in the 2022-2023 plan.
HCPS has contracted consultants in early literacy to provide in-school targeted training for 8 of our Title 1 schools.	HCPS has contracted with Benchmark Education to provide training to the 11 schools that are piloting the Benchmark Advance 2022 reading program in grades kindergarten through 5 th grade. Each of these trainings involved information related to the Science of Reading. All reading/literacy specialists, general educators, and special educators at these 11 schools received a three-hour training in August 2023. Each school also had a one-day training provided by a consultant from Benchmark Education at their individual school. In addition to the training from Benchmark consultants, Reading/Literacy Specialists participated in two train-the-trainer days to build their own content knowledge and plan for providing the same
HCPS announced plans for piloting a literacy program in March of 2023.	In April of 2023, a committee of 50 stakeholders convened to review high-quality instructional materials. Six vendors were selected based on EdReports for formal review. In May of 2023, the HCPS Board of Education approved a pilot of Benchmark Advance 2022 for grades kindergarten through 5 th grade at 11 elementary schools.

HCPS addresses challenges in professional learning and literacy instruction through purposeful initiatives. Efforts include reallocating early dismissal days for teacher planning and collaboration, and Science of Reading-aligned training, such as LETRS cohorts and Benchmark Education partnerships. Despite logistical hurdles like tracking training completion and staffing shortages for ELL support, HCPS remains proactive, seeking innovative solutions to support instructional staff and students.

Current Challenge	Plan for Mitigation/Continual Progress
<p>In an effort to provide teachers with additional time for grading and planning and to provide schools with additional time for school-based professional development, the Professional Development Office decided that all early dismissal days (one per month) will be either teacher planning time or school-based professional development. In the past, four of these early dismissal days were allotted to content area professional learning. An additional challenge for elementary professional learning is that the time allotted for content specific professional learning must be split between RELA, math, science, and social studies content.</p>	<p>Members of the RELA Office are available to provide content professional learning during early dismissal days if a school elects to use their school-based time for that purpose.</p> <p>School-based reading and literacy specialists also have an opportunity to present professional learning during school-based professional learning time under the direction of their school administrator.</p> <p>Specialists in the RELA Office continue to provide school-specific, individualized professional learning throughout the year to all elementary schools.</p>
<p>Continued commitment of HCPS staff for opportunities beyond the workday for professional learning aligned to the Science of Reading research.</p>	<p>LETRS: HCPS has a 40-teacher cohort signed up and committed to complete LETRS training for Units 1-4 from January 2024 to December 2024, and two cohorts running from April 2024 to October 2024.</p> <p>The RELA Office is partnering with the Office of Special Education to expand the cohort offerings for OG+ training. A cohort of 60 participants will cost \$169,500. By the end of the 60- hour hybrid course, participants will have been educated in Science of Reading principles and will be OG certified.</p>
<p>At the school level, finding sufficient time for teachers to collaborate on literacy tasks such as co-creating instructional materials, analyzing student work, peer observation, and coaching is limited.</p>	<p>Schools could use their ESSER subs to provide coverage for teachers to have collaborative time. Schools could utilize the time available for school-based professional development. The RELA Office can work with school-based specialists to ensure that available time for collaboration is used to its maximum benefit, including clear goals and expectations.</p>
<p>Piloting a new reading program in 11 schools requires an intentional plan for successful implementation while also maintaining professional learning for the current program. An additional challenge in piloting a new program is the time factor that needs to be considered when determining the success of the program and whether the program is having an impact on student achievement. The 2023-2024 school year was year one of the pilot and teachers are in the stage of learning the program with initial implementation.</p>	<p>HCPS has partnered with Benchmark Education to provide professional learning to teachers, special educators, specialists, and administrators on the Benchmark Advance 2022 literacy program. To continue monitoring progress and program success, it has been determined to continue the full pilot for an additional year.</p>

Current Challenge	Plan for Mitigation/Continual Progress
Tracking teachers who have completed various training in a system with over 3,000 instructional staff can be difficult. Finding opportunities for individuals who missed required training is also challenging due to limited professional development time and limitations of contracts with outside consultants.	Professional Development Office continues to explore creative ways to make sure that all teachers receive the required training related to the Science of Reading.
The number of staff for ELL teachers has not kept up with the increased population of students who are English language learners. There are currently 20 ELL teachers to service an ELL student population of 674 students (Pre-K to 5 th grade) and 560 students (6 th -12 th grade).	At meetings for reading/literacy specialists, the RELA Office regularly includes sessions on instructional practices to support students who are English language learners. The Benchmark Advance 2022 Literacy program being piloted does have specific iELD supports for various levels of proficiency based on the WIDA assessment for each individual lesson to support teachers in meeting the needs of their ELL students.

For the 2022-2023 school year, we projected the following performance levels:

Student Group	2022 2023 Projected (as a %)				2022 2023 Actual (as a %)			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
All	7	37	49	7	5.2	36.2	53.1	5.5
M	8	41	47	4	5.5	39.7	50.5	4.3
F	8	33	52	7	<5%	32.7	55.7	6.6
NB	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
ED	16	51	32	1	10.5	52.1	36.0	1.4
EL	15	51	33	1	15.0	57.0	28.0	0.0
SE	26	54	19	1	19.0	66.6	14.1	0.3

Based on this data, we saw growth that exceeded our projections related to the performance of male students and students who are economically disadvantaged in all performance levels. Female students showed growth that met or exceeded projections in all performance levels except for level 4 which was only 0.4% under the projected results. English learners and students with special education services were the two groups that did not consistently meet the projected growth, although the number of students with special education services scoring at level 1 on MCAP was 7% lower than the projected goal of 26%. As reported by MSDE for English/Language Arts grades 3-8 assessments by LEA comparing SY 2022-2023 to SY 2021-2022, HCPS showed the second highest ELA growth in the State with a 6.0% improvement.

References: [Ready to Read State Report Collection 23-24](#); [MSDE Data File Tab 10](#)

HCPS continues to assess and progress monitor using the DIBELS 8th Edition Early Reading Screener. Beginning in the 2021 school year to the current school year, there has been a continual decline of the percentage of students at the beginning of the year identified as at-risk for reading difficulties. Specific for grade 3, the 2021-2022 beginning of the year data identified 15.8% of third graders at-risk for reading difficulties. For the 2023-2024 school year, 10.0% of third grade students were identified as at-risk for reading difficulties at the start of the school year. In order to deliver instruction that is tailored to the varying needs of a diverse population of students, professional learning with teachers includes protocols for data analysis and decision making including how to prioritize student needs and determine the best instructional approach for addressing those needs. Also, continued training is occurring to assist teachers in planning and implementing targeted, skill-based small group instruction that is based on student performance. Finally, HCPS is diligently working with MSDE on the required comprehensive literacy plan due June 28, 2024, with full alignment with the tenets of the Science of Reading. **References:** [Science of](#)

[Reading Workshop Sample](#); [Ready to Read State Report Collection 23-24](#); [Science of Reading Summer Institute](#)

XI. College and Career Readiness in Mathematics

Initial Blueprint Implementation Plan Reference: Questions 82-100 and 105

In March 2023, the LEA described how it would ensure all Pre-K-5 students are on the path to becoming college and career ready in mathematics. Based on implementation of the LEA's plans over the last year, discuss the district's progress in transforming its systems and practices and achieving the intended outcomes of the Blueprint. Responses must address the following questions.

- What progress has been made in implementation related to both planned activities and anticipated outcomes? If progress has been limited, what challenges has the LEA encountered? Consider, identify, and refer to available data as needed to demonstrate progress.
- How is the LEA adapting its plans to mitigate challenges and/or ensure continued progress and future success? Which strategies are not working that the LEA will no longer implement, and which new strategies does the LEA intend to implement? Include the rationale for adjustments.
- **Required Data Analysis:** Through an analysis of data, discuss progress towards meeting the Blueprint Outcome ensuring all students are on the path to becoming college and career ready in mathematics.
- **Note:** LEAs must submit their draft Pre-K-5 comprehensive math plans in alignment with the science of learning by September 15, 2024.

Criteria for Success

- Identifies highest priority areas and/or strategies discussed in the March 2023 submission and provides detailed updates related to progress, including identifying challenges where progress has been limited.
- Identifies and provides the rationale for new/revised strategies, activities, and/or outcomes that have been developed or revised since the 2023 submission.
- Discusses how specific feedback provided for the 2023 submission has been addressed, if applicable.
- Provides analysis of math data to identify trends in achievement and lack of achievement, including disaggregated by student groups, and describes instructional changes to improve achievement and how progress will be monitored for students' academic achievement in math in grades Pre-K-5.

HCPS Pre-K – 5 Mathematics instruction supports students' path to CCR.

The progress and adaptations related to the 2022-2023 Blueprint plan reflect a comprehensive approach to enhancing mathematics instruction and supporting educators' professional growth. Notably, the walkthrough process has been expanded and revised to include all elementary schools, facilitating data-driven discussions on math-rich environments, effective teaching practices, and curriculum fidelity. The Office of Mathematics continues to provide tailored support to schools and teachers, with initiatives such as new teacher visitations and ongoing professional learning. Despite challenges, including systemic changes impacting professional development time and staffing adjustments, HCPS remains committed to providing high-quality, culturally responsive mathematics instruction through updated instructional materials and data-driven assessment. HCPS is diligently working with MSDE on the required comprehensive math plan with full alignment with the tenets of the Science of Learning.

2022 2023 Plan	Progress and Adaptations related to Original Plan as of January 2024
HQIM – Mathematics Adoption Projections	<i>Tier 1:</i> During the 2022-23 school year, HCPS mathematics supervisors researched High Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM), and the updated enVisionmath 2024 edition meets the requirements. Pending funding approval, it will be implemented K-5 in Fall 2024. <i>Tiers 2 and 3:</i> No changes Pre-K-5 for elementary mathematics

2022 2023 Plan	Progress and Adaptations related to Original Plan as of January 2024
Types of Training Provided and Fidelity of Implementation	<p>Walkthroughs during the 2022-23 school year were scheduled at the request from school-based administrators. For 2023-24, the walkthrough process was expanded to include every elementary school. By the end of 23-24, all elementary schools will have been visited twice with a team from the Mathematics Office and Office of Accountability. This year a common data collection form focused on three components-Math Rich Environment, Effective Teaching Practices as identified by NCTM, and Fidelity of Implementation of the Curriculum. The instructional dialogues/debrief sessions have been an effective approach to sharing instructional strengths and needs of the school and planning any targeted follow-up support that is necessary. Reference: Math Walk Throughs 23-24</p> <p>The Office of Mathematics continues to survey schools and teachers following professional learning sessions to provide support that meets the needs of the elementary schools. Instructional coach positions continue to be assigned to schools based on the ratio of tenured to non-tenured teachers and are an additional support for non-tenured teachers.</p> <p>Each Title I elementary school and one priority school continue to have a full-time school-based math specialist who provides planning support, model lessons, co-teaching, coaching cycles, and professional development to support the school performance and achievement plan. School-based math teacher specialists participate in quarterly full-day meetings and monthly check-in meetings with the Office of Mathematics designed to improve their mathematics content and pedagogical knowledge and keep abreast of district initiatives that relate to their roles. One elementary school lost Title I designation and as a result, the math teacher specialist position was eliminated at that school.</p>
Supplemental and Intervention Materials	<p>HCPS continues to utilize the rigorous review and selection process for supplemental and intervention instructional materials. The following materials continue to be approved for use with students in grades kindergarten through grade 5: DreamBox Learning (Gr K-5), Do the Math (Gr K-5), First in Math (Gr 2-5). To date, the Curriculum Equity Audit has not been completed but it remains a district priority. HCPS is confident that the supplemental and intervention materials will meet the Equity Audit criteria. References: DreamBox Learning Math research; Do the Math research; First in Math research</p>
Materials - Specific Professional Development and Support	<p>For the 2023-24 school year the walkthrough process was expanded and revised to include every elementary school. By the conclusion of the 2023-24 school year, all elementary schools will have been visited twice with a team from the Mathematics Office and Office of Accountability. This year a common data collection form was developed and focused on three components-Math Rich Environment, Effective Teaching Practices as identified by NCTM, and Fidelity of Implementation of the Curriculum. The instructional dialogues/debrief sessions have been an effective approach to sharing instructional strengths and needs of the school and planning any targeted follow-up support that is necessary.</p>
Systems and Structures for Progress Monitoring and Measures for Success	<p>The Office of Mathematics provides data implication resources to grade 1 teachers. Mathematics specialists provide school-specific support to teachers and school teams to analyze grade 1 mathematics benchmark data, determine instructional implications, and implement instructional strategies. Data from MCAP scores is used to identify students in need of additional mathematics support. This data is analyzed by the Office of Mathematics, school performance teams, instructional leadership teams, and teachers. Resources and strategies will be provided to teachers to address needed areas and to organize students into groups for the purposes of making instructional decisions and differentiating instruction.</p> <p>In the Fall of 2023, the Office of Accountability, in conjunction with the RELA and Mathematics offices convened an assessment review committee to search for assessments to replace the Reading Inventory and Mathematics Inventory provided by HMH. The committee included educators and administrators from across the district, and other stakeholders to review and evaluate diagnostic and benchmark assessments for district-wide use. The committee spent a lot of time considering the various products and will be piloting iReady during the spring of 2024.</p>

2022 2023 Plan	Progress and Adaptations related to Original Plan as of January 2024
<p>Ongoing, Job-Embedded Professional Development and Organizational Structures and Support</p>	<p>The Office of Professional Learning organizes new elementary teacher visits and facilitates data gathering and discussion. This new structure provides consistency, coordinates a common lens of instruction across the content areas, and lessens the impact on schools' need for substitute teachers.</p> <p>To provide teachers with additional time for grading and planning and to provide schools with additional time for school-based professional development, the Professional Development Office decided that all early dismissal days (one per month) will be devoted to teacher planning or school-based professional development. This systemic change reduced the amount of time and frequency of visits from the math office for content specific professional learning.</p> <p>For the 2023-24 school year, brown bag planning sessions were not scheduled due to a systemic initiative to increase teachers' self-directed time for planning and grading. Also, time for mathematics content specific professional learning has been impacted and reduced to meet the required number of hours for reading professional learning sessions.</p> <p>Members of the Office of Mathematics are available to provide content professional learning during early dismissal days if a school elects to use their school-based time for that purpose. At a school's request, specialists from the Office of Mathematics continue to provide school-specific, individualized learning throughout the year to elementary schools.</p> <p>Data analysis and instructional implications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kindergarten Numeracy Assessment Progressions • Grade 1 cumulative trimester mathematics benchmark • Mathematics Inventory • MCAP data from Pearson Next • MCAP structure, Reasoning and Modeling evidence statements and holistic rubrics, using the rubrics to score student work. • Supplemental Tools: Implementing and progress monitoring -DreamBox Math and Do the Math • Supported planning for core mathematics instruction. • Implementing NCTM Effective Teaching Practices for Mathematics • Demonstration lessons • Formative assessment and small group instruction in mathematics • Problem solving/ Making sense of word problems. <p>OGAP -Mathematics Supervisors and Specialists in the HCPS Office of Mathematics are registered to attend spring 2024 OGAP sessions to enhance knowledge of mathematics teaching and learning. Summer 2024 OGAP sessions will be advertised.</p> <p>References: Job Description Teacher Specialist - Mathematics 2-2020 (1); Math Curriculum Specialist Job Description; Math Curriculum Analysis Tool</p>



2022 2023 Plan	Progress and Adaptations related to Original Plan as of January 2024
Systems and Structures for Progress Monitoring and Measures for Success	<p>The Office of Mathematics provides data implication resources to grade 1 teachers. Mathematics specialists provide school-specific support to teachers and school teams to analyze grade 1 mathematics benchmark data, determine instructional implications, and implement instructional strategies. Data from MCAP scores will also be used to identify students in need of additional mathematics support. This data will be analyzed by the Office of Mathematics, by school performance teams, by instructional leadership teams, and by teachers. Resources and strategies will be provided to teachers to address needed areas and to organize students into groups for the purposes of making instructional decisions and differentiating instruction.</p> <p>In the Fall of 2023, the Office of Accountability, in conjunction with the RELA and Mathematics offices convened an assessment review committee to search for assessments to replace the Reading Inventory and Mathematics Inventory provided by HMM. The committee included educators and administrators from across the district, and other stakeholders to review and evaluate diagnostic and benchmark assessments for district-wide use. The committee spent a lot of time considering the various products and will be piloting iReady during the spring of 2024.</p>
High-Quality, Content-Rich, Culturally Responsive Instructional Materials	<p>HCPS convened a committee of educators, administrators, and other stakeholders in winter 2016 to review and evaluate the available elementary mathematics curriculum. The committee chose Pearson (now Savvas) enVisionMATH2.0, and HCPS implemented beginning fall 2016.</p> <p>During the 2022-23 school year, HCPS mathematics supervisors researched High Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM), and the updated enVisionmath 2024 edition meets the requirements. Pending funding approval, it will be implemented K-5 in Fall 2024. The updated instructional material includes a variety of desired features including low threshold/high ceiling and engaging tasks that build students' confidence to think mathematically and solve problems on their own, explicit instruction, check for understanding, guided and independent practice. Teacher training for the updated edition in March 2024.</p> <p>To date, the Curriculum Equity Audit has not been completed but it remains a district priority. HCPS is confident the new edition will meet the Equity Audit criteria. The Savvas enVisionmath 2024 edition reflects the cultural diversity of the students served by HCPS. This includes featuring content, examples, and stories from various cultures, ethnicities, and backgrounds. Materials are relevant and relatable to students' lived experiences, incorporating elements such as language, traditions, values, and customs that resonate with their cultural backgrounds and the materials are accessible in multiple languages. Teachers can customize and modify materials to better suit the needs of their students. The materials are accessible in multiple languages.</p> <p>References: Board of Education Policies 0002-000 Curriculum Development Oversight, 0003-000 Curriculum Development Implementation, and 0005-000 Review and Selection of Instructional Materials; Materials Analysis Tools; Math Curriculum Analysis Tool</p>

Data Analysis: While HCPS performance grew from 2021-22 to 2022-23, HCPS is diligently working towards further improvement. One trend noted was the quantify and complexity of reasoning and modeling items included on the MCAP exams but not necessarily adequate similar opportunities in classrooms or on teacher's formative and summative assessments. The Office of Mathematics designed purposeful professional learning sessions to emphasize providing students opportunities to see and attempt these types of items. In addition, time was provided for our school-based specialists to examine our primary resources and identify these types of items using current textbook resources. The reasoning and modeling evidence statements and rubrics were shared, discussed, and examples were worked with

the expectation that teachers would work to include reasoning items in their daily instruction, on formative and summative assessments, and on quizzes and unit assessments. *Reference: MSDE Data File Tab 11*

Math 2022 23 Actual (as a %) Grades 3 5				
	1	2	3	4
All	14.9%	44.8%	37.6%	2.7%
M	14.9%	41.6%	39.7%	3.8%
F	14.9%	48.0%	35.5%	1.6%
NB	NA	NA	NA	NA
ED	28.2%	51.9%	19.3%	0.6%
EL	27.5%	57.9%	13.6%	1.0%
SE	40.2%	49.1%	10.6%	0.1%



School teams use data protocols and benchmark assessment intervals within the SPA process for continuous student progress monitoring. Structures include a variety of teams from grade levels and collaborative planning teams to achievement and goals teams, the School Performance and Achievement Team, and the Instructional Leadership Teams at each school. Additionally, the District Instructional Leadership team including the Executive Directors and Directors of Elementary and Secondary Performance, Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment, and Student Services review data and meet regularly with school-based leaders to support the data dialogues and school action plans which are noted within the SPA plan as part of the school improvement process. School teams review data to determine how to address mathematics within the SPA plan through a mathematics goal team.

XII. Algebra Readiness and Success

NEW Describe the LEA's plan to increase student readiness and success in Algebra I at both the middle and high school levels, including specific strategies and supports to intervene with students struggling with math. Discuss related challenges and data as needed. Considerations:

- Analysis of student-level data by specific skills
- Intervention models and progress monitoring
- Training and professional development for teachers
- High-quality school day tutoring
- **Required Data Analysis:** Through an analysis of data, discuss progress towards meeting the Blueprint outcome of increasing middle and high school students' college and career readiness in mathematics.

Criteria for Success

- Describes a cohesive and coherent plan that addresses all considerations provided to increase student readiness and success in Algebra I at both the middle and high school levels including acceleration and remediation.
- Identifies specific challenges and associated strategies to overcome challenges.
- Describes how LEA evaluates effectiveness of strategies and supports and how these evaluations inform adjustments/changes to interventions.
- Provides analysis of math data to identify trends in achievement and lack of achievement, including disaggregated by student groups, and describes instructional changes to improve achievement and how progress will be monitored for students' enrollment and academic achievement in Algebra I.

HCPS is committed to student success in Algebra I.

To increase student success in Algebra I at both the middle and high school levels, we will implement the following strategies and considerations including supports to intervene with students struggling with math.

HCPS uses high-quality instructional materials in its Algebra I courses: For middle school Algebra I in grades 7 and 8, HCPS currently uses the UCSMP *Algebra* text. This resource is supplemented with insert lessons and exploration lessons to align to the MCCRS. The use of these primary resources and supplements ensures that all students receive fully aligned instruction at the level of rigor required by the state standards. [Reference: UCSMP Algebra](#)

For high school Algebra I, HCPS currently uses the *High School Math Solution Algebra I* by Carnegie Learning as the primary resource. This resource aligns extremely well with the Maryland College and Career Ready Standards for Algebra I. [Reference: Carnegie Learning Algebra I Scope & Sequence](#)

In the 2024-2025 school year, HCPS will be implementing a new resource, *enVision Algebra I*, in high school. The lessons in this MCCRS-aligned program follow a four-step design: Explore, Understand and Apply, Practice and Problem Solving, and Assess and Differentiate. The curriculum incorporates real-world applications and problem-solving activities which help students understand the relevance of the concepts they are learning and improve their problem-solving, modeling, and reasoning skills. Additionally, the program includes:

- Alignment with our existing elementary and middle school curricula,
- Embedded interactivities powered by Desmos,
- Braining camp – digital math manipulatives for interactive math lessons,
- MathXL – embedded assignments that provide instant feedback with learning aids that act as a personal tutor,
- Savvy Adaptive Practice – online component that delivers just-right math content to each student – both practice and instruction – in real time, and
- 3-Act Math Tasks – high-interest, low-entry tasks that develop students' conceptual understanding, procedural fluency, and adaptive reasoning as they test out different models and conjectures.

[Reference: AGA Curriculum - Savvas 2024](#)



The HCPS Office of Mathematics provides curriculum course notes for middle school and high school Algebra I courses. The course notes include enduring understandings and essential questions for each unit, Suggested pacing for each unit, Objective(s), overview, and the aligned Maryland College and Career Ready standards for each lesson, Teacher notes and suggestions for each lesson, Additional teacher resources and student resources by lesson, Evaluative criteria for lessons and units. Use of these course notes gives teachers insight into each lesson and unit and possible resources to use with students. This ensures that all students receive fully aligned instruction at the level of rigor required by the state standards. [Reference: Intro Algebra-Algebra I 2023-2024 Module 1 Sample](#)

The HCPS Office of Mathematics has provided all Algebra I teachers with an item bank of Algebra I MCAP-like questions. These questions are located in Canvas, are searchable by Maryland College and Career Ready standard, and may be easily imported into a Canvas quiz for use with students. Use of this item bank allows students to demonstrate their knowledge of Algebra I concepts using MCAP-like item types and at a level of rigor required by the state standards.

HCPS strives to hire teachers of high-quality: At least one member of the Office of Mathematics serves on the HCPS Recruitment Committee, attends college job fairs, interviews prospective mathematics teaching candidates, and makes hiring recommendations to school administration and to the Human Resources department.

The HCPS Office of Mathematics provides quality professional development to mathematics teachers several times throughout the school year: One focus for the past several school years has been the NCTM Effective Mathematics Teaching Practices. Professional learning sessions connect these teaching practice standards to the teaching of Algebra I. For example, teaching how can Algebra I teachers use purposeful questions to assess and advance students' reasoning and sense making about important mathematical ideas and relationships. Also, giving best practices on how can Algebra I teachers facilitate discourse among students to build shared understanding of mathematical ideas by analyzing and comparing student approaches and arguments.

Professional development on the new enVision Algebra I resource was provided to all high school Algebra I teachers on March 25, 2024, and will be followed by additional professional development in August 2024. The professional learning sessions will focus on curriculum components and program implementation, including best practices for mathematics instruction in Algebra I.

The curriculum specialists in the Office of Mathematics are currently enrolled in the MSDE Modeling and Reasoning Professional Learning Series. From this workshop, professional development experiences will be created and implemented with secondary mathematics teachers to build their capacity to provide high-quality modeling and reasoning experiences to their students.

In Spring 2024, all members of the Office of Mathematics are attending *Standards-Based Instruction* workshops sponsored by MSDE and the Ongoing Assessment Project (OGAP). OGAP is a systematic and intentional formative assessment system in mathematics based upon the mathematics education research on how students learn specific concepts, common errors students make, or pre-conceptions or misconceptions that interfere with students learning new concepts and solving related problems. From this workshop, HCPS professional development experiences will be created and implemented with teachers to increase their knowledge and ability to teach prerequisite content necessary to be successful in Algebra I. Teachers will also have the opportunity to attend the OGAP sessions over the summer.

The HCPS Office of Mathematics is continually involved in the teacher appraisal process.

Mathematics Office members observe Algebra I teachers through both informal walkthroughs and formal observations. Teacher feedback is aligned with the Danielson Framework for Teaching and the NCTM Effective Mathematics Teaching Practices. Feedback is both general as well as specific to the teaching of Algebra I.

Students that demonstrate a high level of proficiency in mathematics have the opportunity to accelerate in their study of mathematics: The goal of student placement is for each student to be appropriately challenged while developing a positive mathematics identity and high sense of agency. As this applies in the transition from elementary school to middle school, there are two options for sixth grade math course placement; these are Mathematics Grade 6 and Prealgebra. A variety of data sources are utilized in recommending grade 6 student placements, which may include grade 5 teacher recommendation, grade 5 classroom performance, grade 5 performance on topic assessments, grade 5 Mathematics Inventory performance, and grades 3 and 4 MCAP performance.

In Mathematics Grade 6, instruction is aligned to grade 6 mathematics standards. Topics studied in this course include positive and negative rational numbers, ratios and proportional relationships, algebraic equations and inequalities, ratio and rate, percent, area, surface area of rectangles and squares, volume of cubes and rectangular solids, statistical variability, and data distributions.

Prealgebra is a highly accelerated course aligned to grade 6 and 7 mathematics standards. This course includes all the topics described above as well as absolute value, area of triangles and trapezoids, circumference and area of circles, size-change models, operations and properties of integers, probability, and area and volume of composite figures. Students enrolled in Algebra should expect increased rigor in

learning and increased homework. Successful completion of Algebra allows students to further accelerate and enroll in Algebra I in grade 7. Students needing more support after Algebra would enroll in Integrated Mathematics 7. In addition, students that demonstrate a high level of proficiency in Mathematics Grade 6 have the opportunity to accelerate in their study of mathematics by enrolling in Integrated Mathematics 7.

Integrated Mathematics 7 is an accelerated course aligned to grade 7 and grade 8 mathematics standards. Topics studied in this course include number systems and integer operations, equations and inequalities, ratios and proportional relationships, rate of change and slope, slopes and lines, linear systems, powers and roots, translations, reflections, and rotations, geometry, and statistics and probability. Successful completion of Integrated Mathematics 7 allows students to accelerate and enroll in Algebra I in grade 8. This course sequence is illustrated in the artifact attached. [Reference: HCPS Math HS Course Sequence 23-24](#)

Various interventions and progress monitoring tools are used to ensure student readiness for and success in Algebra I:

In K – 7, students complete lessons in Dreambox, an interactive, adaptive, self-paced program that provides engaging activities to learn and practice skills and concepts in mathematics. This personalized, adaptive program supports and addresses a student’s unfinished learning to ensure readiness for Algebra I. Schools may purchase seat licenses for First in Math, an additional support approved for grades K – 8, with currently 11 schools using this resource. First in Math is an online platform that includes an Algebra Suite that is specifically designed to build each of the six foundational skills needed to succeed in Algebra: Basic Facts, Fractions, Decimals, Integers, Exponents, and Order of Operations.



Successful completion of Mathematics 8 allows students to enroll in Algebra I in grade 9. The goal of student placement is for each student to be appropriately challenged while developing a positive mathematics identity and high sense of agency.

As this applies in the transition from middle school to high school, there are **three options for mathematics in grade 9:**

- Demonstrating higher levels of proficiency in Mathematics 8 may enroll in Algebra I in an alternating day format.
- Demonstrating mid-level of proficiency in Mathematics 8 may enroll in Introduction to Algebra/Algebra I course. These students, who have demonstrated a need for additional support, are provided daily 82-minute instruction that includes access to MATHia, an online math learning software that personalizes instruction for students based on how they learn over time. [Reference: Carnegie Learning MATHia Algebra I Scope & Sequence](#)
- Identified by the Office of Accountability as not demonstrating readiness for Algebra I are recommended to enroll in the Ramp Up to Algebra course as their first high school mathematics course. This course provides students an opportunity to bolster prerequisite skills and understanding to ensure success in Algebra I the following year.

Upon successful completion of Algebra I: students then may take a variety of mathematics courses in high school. A variety of pathways allows students to customize their high school mathematics experiences dependent upon student’s future plans for college or career. [Reference: HCPS Math HS Course Sequence 23-24](#)

Supporting Students: High School Algebra I classes often include the support of special educators and/or paraeducators, depending on the IEPs and 504 plans of the students in the class. The Office of Mathematics and the Office of Special Education are currently reviewing additional resources to support students identified as not on track to be College and Career Ready. To monitor progress, students in grades 2 – Algebra I currently take the Mathematics Inventory assessment 2 or 3 times per school year. In

the Fall of 2023, the Office of Accountability, in conjunction with the RELA and Mathematics offices, convened an assessment review committee to search for assessments to replace the Reading Inventory and Mathematics Inventory provided by HMM. The committee included educators, administrators from across the district, and other stakeholders, to review and evaluate diagnostic and benchmark assessments for district-wide use. The committee spent time considering various products and will be piloting iReady during the spring of 2024. For the 2024-2025 school year, students in grades 2 – 8 will take iReady assessments after the completion of the Spring 2024 pilot. Also in 2024-2025, Algebra I students will be assessed with HCPS-developed cumulative benchmark assessments.

Remediation is available for students in need of support in the form of high-dosage school-day tutoring: As detailed in question 13, HCPS offers FEV Tutor as an option for students for all English/Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Science courses in grades 3-12. FEV Tutor offers two types of formats for students, 1:1 Drop-In Homework Help (This is best used when a student is stuck on a particular question or topic) or Scheduled Weekly Sessions (This is best used for recurring weekly sessions focused on a particular subject area.) Students access FEV Tutor through the Canvas Learning Management System. In addition, students who scored performance level 2 on the MCAP Algebra I, MCAP Geometry, or MCAP Algebra II assessment in the 2022 – 2023 school year were given the opportunity to engage in 10 in-building support sessions with FEV Tutor to occur during or after the school day. Students who scored performance level 1 on the MCAP Algebra I, MCAP Geometry, or MCAP Algebra II assessment in the 2022 – 2023 school year were given the opportunity to engage in 20 in-building support sessions with FEV Tutor to occur during or after the school day. Students were then retested in the appropriate course during the fall MCAP testing window.

Implementation of the HCPS mathematics program has several challenges. The Office of Mathematics has developed strategies to address these challenges, evaluates the effectiveness of these strategies, and adjusts accordingly.

Challenge #1: Budget - Often the programs and resources available to teachers are affected by the HCPS operating budget. For example, HCPS used to purchase Dreambox for all students in grades K – 8. Due to budget limitations, Dreambox licenses are now only available to students in grades K – 7. In grade 7, only students in Mathematics 7 have licenses. To address this, school administration can purchase seat licenses for Dreambox or First in Math for students in grades 7 and 8, if desired.

Challenge #2: Teacher implementation of the curriculum - Some teachers may implement the curriculum using non-primary resources. These alternate resources may not be at the level of rigor required to meet the expectations of the state. Additionally, some teachers may not use the additional resources provided in the HCPS course notes and learning management system. The strategies of the Office of Mathematics are to educate school administration about the level of expectation of the State, to educate teachers about the level of expectation of the State, and to monitor teacher curriculum implementation through classroom walk throughs and observations.

Challenge #3: Teacher pacing - Some teachers may not adhere to the suggested pacing as recommended by the Office of Mathematics. The suggested pacing was developed to enable all students to be exposed to all major content of Algebra I. For several reasons, some teachers may only expose students to part of the major content in Algebra I. Therefore, students may not receive instruction on the major content of the course and then may be less successful on the MCAP Algebra I assessment. The strategies of the Office of Mathematics are to educate school administration about the pacing guidelines, to educate teachers about the pacing guidelines, and to monitor teacher class pacing through classroom walk throughs and observations.

Challenge #4: Student unfinished learning - Due to the pandemic and other factors, students may enter Algebra I with some unfinished learning from middle school. The strategies of the Office of Mathematics are to continually educate teachers about implementing a variety of learning activities, including

differentiating with small groups, teaching mini-lessons, using just-in-time instruction, and utilizing Dreambox and First in Math, if available.

Mathematics teachers, school administrators, and the HCPS Office of Mathematics use data to monitor student progress, to inform decisions about the success of students and classes, and to assess the effectiveness of the mathematics program. The Office of Mathematics also evaluates data to determine the needs of teachers that can be addressed in county professional learning sessions.

Data Analysis: The HCPS Office of Mathematics continually analyzes data to identify trends in student achievement. Sources of data include 2022 and 2023 MCAP demographic performance level summary reports and LEA evidence statement analysis reports. Data from the performance level summary reports show similar performance levels across disaggregated student groups - most students did not meet proficiency. For example, for 2023 Algebra I, the demographic performance level summary shows that the percent of students achieving the proficient level or above was 16% for females and 20% for males. For the same exam, proficiency or above was achieved by 23% of white students, 31% of Asian students, and only 4% of black students. In addition, the rate of proficiency or above for economically disadvantaged students was only 6%. Presentations and continual discussion about how to motivate, engage, and differentiate instruction for all learners occurs at countywide professional learning sessions, secondary mathematics department chair meetings, and locally at schools through their School Performance and Achievement (SPA) teams. **Reference:** [Demographic Performance Level Summary for HCPS Algebra I](#); [MSDE Evidence Statement Analysis Algebra I](#); [MSDE Data File Tab 12, 12a](#)

School teams use data protocols and short-cycle assessment intervals within the SPA process for continuous student progress monitoring. The assessment calendar and progress monitoring intervals designate when students must be reassessed, and progress reported.

Data from the LEA Evidence Statement Analysis report for the Algebra I assessment 2022–2023 shows that HCPS students scored at about the same rate on specific questions as students from Maryland. Notable exceptions include:

- A.SSE.B.3b: Complete the square in a quadratic expression to reveal the maximum or minimum value of the function it defines.
- F.IF.B.6-1: Calculate and interpret the average rate of change of a function (presented symbolically or as a table) over a specified interval. Estimate the rate of change from a graph. Focused on graphic representations.
- F.LE.A.1b: Recognize situations in which one quantity changes at a constant rate per unit interval relative to another.
- A1.R.1: Given an equation, reason about the number and/or nature of the solutions.



One trend noted was one-point reasoning and modeling items included on the MCAP Algebra I exam but not necessarily in classrooms or on teacher's formative and summative assessments. The Office of Mathematics designed purposeful professional learning sessions to emphasize providing students opportunities to see and attempt these types of items. In addition, time was provided for teachers to practice writing these types of items using current textbook resources. The Algebra I reasoning evidence statements were shared, discussed, and examples were worked with the expectation that teachers would work to include reasoning items in their daily instruction, on formative and summative assessments, and on quizzes and unit assessments. This may address the lower than state average on A1.R.1 items. The other content standards noted were shared with Algebra I teachers at professional learning sessions as well as at department chair meetings. Notes about the above standards as well as sample items and points of emphasis will be included in Algebra I curriculum course notes in the future.

Data from MCAP scores is used to identify students in need of additional mathematics support. This data is analyzed by the Office of Mathematics, by school performance teams, by instructional leadership teams, and by teachers. Resources and strategies are provided to teachers to address needed areas and

to organize students into groups for the purposes of making instructional decisions and differentiating instruction. Additional student support may be found in the response to question #14.

To monitor progress, students in grades 2 – Algebra I currently take the Mathematics Inventory assessment 2 or 3 times per school year. Teachers, school administration, and the Office of Mathematics may monitor student progress. A sample school growth report is attached here as one possible step in monitoring student progress. **Reference:** [Sample Math Inventory Student Growth Report](#)

Students enrolled in Introduction to Algebra/Algebra I, are provided daily 82-minute instruction that includes access to MATHia, an online math learning software that personalizes instruction for students based on how they learn over time. MATHia offers a variety of reports for teachers, school administrators, and the Office of Mathematics. These include a student progress report, session reports, skills reports, standards report, and an APLSE report which provides information about the class and specific students, and the software also projects student and class success by the end of the school year. **Reference:** [Sample MATHia APLSE Class Report with Individualized Student Data](#)

Teachers engage students in an ongoing balanced assessment program of both formative and summative assessments and gather evidence of student learning in additional ways, including high-cognitive level question-driven classroom conversations. Teachers use this assessment data to organize students into groups for the purposes of making instructional decisions and differentiating instruction. Professional learning about formative assessment techniques has been provided both district-wide and to specific schools upon request. In addition, mathematics department chairs participated in a book study of *The Formative Five*, by Fennell, Kobett, and Wray. Department chairs also participated in viewing and discussing *The Classroom Experiment*, by Dylan Wiliam. Wiliam's techniques of No Hands Up, Mini-Whiteboards, and Red/Yellow/Green Cups were discussed and encouraged as effective formative assessment techniques to be implemented in HCPS mathematics classrooms. **Reference:** [The Formative Five, Classroom Experiment II](#)

Summative assessments provide student success data at the end of a topic or unit. Due to the More Teaching Less Testing Act, in Algebra I, the Office of Mathematics does not require specific summative assessments. However, Algebra I teachers have access to archived HCPS assessments as well as assessments provided by Carnegie Learning. Through Carnegie Learning, teachers also have access to Edulastic. Using Edulastic, teachers may create assessment items and may search an item database by standard to obtain assessment items. Teachers may also gather data using items from the HCPS Algebra I item bank as well as using the Algebra I practice tests on the MSDE site. Teachers may determine standards that students have mastered as well as standards with which students may need more support.

XIII. High-Quality School Day Tutoring

Initial Blueprint Implementation Plan Reference: Questions 77 and 101.

In March 2023, the LEA discussed how it leveraged high-quality school day tutoring to accelerate instruction and provide additional support to students in literacy and math. Responses included considerations related to the LEA's organization of the school day, collaboration with external partners, and alignment of resources (e.g., Transitional Supplemental Instruction Aid). Based on implementation of the LEA's plans over the last year, discuss the district's progress in transforming its systems and practices and achieving the intended outcomes of the Blueprint. Responses must address the following questions.

- What progress has been made in implementation related to both planned activities and anticipated outcomes? If progress has been limited, what challenges has the LEA encountered? Consider, identify, and refer to available data as needed to demonstrate progress.
- How is the LEA adapting its plans to mitigate challenges and/or ensure continued progress and future success? Which strategies are not working that the LEA will no longer implement, and which new strategies does the LEA intend to implement? Include the rationale for adjustments.

Criteria for Success

- Identifies highest priority areas and/or strategies discussed in the March 2023 submission and provides detailed updates related to progress, including identifying challenges where progress has been limited.
- Identifies and provides the rationale for new/revised strategies, activities, and/or outcomes that have been developed or revised since the 2023 submission.
- Discusses how specific feedback provided for the 2023 submission has been addressed if applicable.
- Demonstrates that tutoring meets the requirements of high-quality in alignment with the Blueprint (Education Article § 5-226)
- Describes how the LEA has/will reorganize the school day to allow for high-quality tutoring that occurs during school hours.

HCPS is committed to individualized student academic support.

The planned activities and anticipated outcomes from the 2022-2023 Blueprint plan regarding language proficiency through targeted tutoring sessions during the school day and summer. Implementation involved hiring nine ELL tutors to collaborate with teachers in delivering supplemental tutoring services. Additionally, students participated in WIDA ACCESS assessments to gauge language proficiency, with score reports expected at the end of the academic year. However, challenges emerged, including the need for close monitoring of tutor hours to comply with human resources policies, and the allocation of consistent funding amid competing priorities.

HCPS prioritized providing high dosage tutoring during the school day, leveraging resources like FEV Tutor for MCAP and SAT preparation and intervention across elementary, middle, and high schools. Assessment data from reading and math inventories, MCAP assessments, and end-of-course exams were utilized to identify skill gaps and measure student progress, although timing limitations regarding MCAP score reports posed additional challenges for evaluation and intervention planning.

2022 2023 Plan	Progress and Adaptations	Challenges
English Language Learners would engage in tutoring sessions during the school day and summer to increase their English proficiency.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 9 EL tutors were hired to work with EL teachers to provide supplemental tutoring services. - Students participated in WIDA ACCESS. Score reports are released at the end of the school year. (Some students may not have WIDA ACCESS reports as it is their first time taking it. These students will be able to compare their screening assessments.) - Hours worked by tutors required close monitoring to follow human resources hourly policy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A consistent funding source becomes a challenge when other items need to be paid using Title III funding. - Working within limited hours due to human resources policy around full/part time employment.
Provide high dosage during the school day tutoring for students in grades 3-12.	High dosage school day tutoring was available to all schools. Schools utilized FEV Tutor for MCAP prep, SAT prep, Student Support Pathways, and intervention. 4 elementary schools participated; 2 middle schools participated; 11 high schools participated. Reading and Math Inventory, MCAP assessments, and end of course data were used to identify skill gaps and to measure success.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Time during the school day - Timing of score reports for MCAP

FEV Tutor: provides personalized 1:1 tutoring in a virtual environment for students in grades 3-12. During the fall of the 2022-2023 school year, HCPS piloted usage of this resource in elementary, middle, and high school environments. This pilot led to a long-term partnership for the remainder of the school year, continuing the piloted Math and ELA support focus, while also including specific SAT Prep opportunities for high school students. FEV Tutor offers two types of formats for students, 1:1 Drop-In Homework Help (This is best used when a student is stuck on a particular question or topic) or Scheduled Weekly

Sessions (This is best used for recurring weekly sessions focused on a particular subject area.) Students access FEV Tutor through the Canvas Learning Management System.

In addition, FEV was incorporated as a tool for the Support Pathway described in question 14. For example, students who scored performance level 2 on the MCAP Algebra I, MCAP Geometry, or MCAP Algebra II assessment in the 2022 – 2023 school year were given the opportunity to engage in 10 in-building support sessions with FEV Tutor to occur during or after the school day. Students who scored performance level 1 on the MCAP Algebra I, MCAP Geometry, or MCAP Algebra II assessment in the 2022 – 2023 school year were given the opportunity to engage in 20 in-building support sessions with FEV Tutor to occur during or after the school day.

Over 1200 students participated in over 6500 tutoring sessions, leading to noticeable improvement in Math and Reading Inventory assessments. The most accelerated growth was demonstrated by middle school ELA FEV Champions (students that complete at least 21 tutoring sessions and have a participation point average of 11 or greater). These students had an accelerated growth of 117% compared to non-FEV Champions. Improvement also occurred on the Math Inventory, where FEV Champions showed a 14% accelerated growth when compared to non-FEV Champions. **References:** [FEV Presentation Jan.2023](#); [FEV Available Data Samples](#); [Tutoring Report HB 1372-Ch.55\(4\(d\)\), 2022 MSAR #13512](#)

AIB Strategic Facilitator Findings regarding FEV Tutoring: The full analysis of the status and decision-making confronting HCPS regarding the use of FEV tutoring is in the next reference link. The following summarizes the assessment: FEV Tutor has been implemented across most schools within HCPS to varying degrees of fidelity. It offers 24-hour instructional support for students. While some perceive it as a valuable resource that alleviates the burden on HCPS instructional staff, others express concerns about student engagement. Challenges in implementation include logistical issues, and difficulty integrating tutoring into the school day. HCPS is actively monitoring FEV Tutor's impact on student outcomes to determine its ongoing investment. While some schools prioritize in-house tutoring by their teaching staff over FEV Tutor, data analysis and evaluation remain essential in gauging intervention effectiveness and informing future decisions. **Reference:** [CCR Listening Tour Report Draft 04.24](#)

XIV. Support for Students to Demonstrate College & Career Readiness in High School

Initial Blueprint Implementation Plan Reference: Questions 109-110 and 122-115

In March 2023, the LEA described the services and support provided to students identified as not on track to graduate in 9th grade and/or not demonstrating college and career readiness (CCR) by the end of 10th grade. Responses included creating and implementing student support pathways, collaborating with institutions of higher education partners, developing individualized CCR plans for each student, and engaging families in supporting student success. Based on implementation of the LEA's plans over the last year, discuss the district's progress in transforming its systems and practices and achieving the intended outcomes of the Blueprint. Responses must address the following questions.

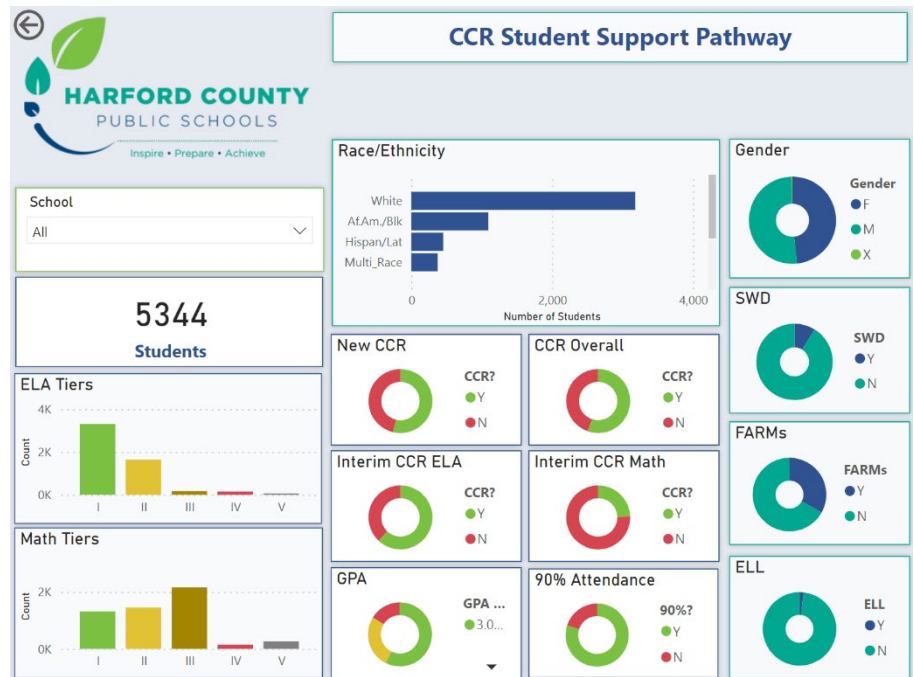
- What progress has been made in implementation related to both planned activities and anticipated outcomes? If progress has been limited, what challenges has the LEA encountered? Consider, identify, and refer to available data as needed to demonstrate progress.
- How is the LEA adapting its plans to mitigate challenges and/or ensure continued progress and future success? Which strategies are not working that the LEA will no longer implement, and which new strategies does the LEA intend to implement? Include the rationale for adjustments.
- **Required Data Analysis:** Through an analysis of data, discuss progress towards meeting the Blueprint Outcome of providing support to students identified as not on track to graduate in 9th grade and/or not demonstrating college and career readiness (CCR) by the end of 10th grade.

Criteria for Success

- Identifies highest priority areas and/or strategies discussed in the March 2023 submission and provides detailed updates related to progress, including identifying challenges where progress has been limited.
- Identifies and provides the rationale for new/revised strategies, activities, and/or outcomes that have been developed or revised since the 2023 submission.
- Discusses how specific feedback provided for the 2023 submission has been addressed if applicable.
- Describes how the LEA engages and collaborates with parents/families for students who are not on track to graduate and/or not progressing towards reaching the CCR standard by the end of 10th grade.
- Describes how individualized plans are developed for each student who has not reached the CCR standard by the end of 10th grade.
- Describes how the LEA supports teachers to lead the development of individualized CCR plans for students who have not met the CCR standard by the end of 10th grade.
- Describes a new program of study for students who have not met the CCR standard by the end of 10th grade developed in collaboration with IHEs that includes courses grounded in experiential learning.

HCPS is committed to individualized support pathways for student success.

In our commitment to student success and individualized support, HCPS has implemented a multifaceted approach to address the diverse needs of its students. Through a comprehensive series of plans, including tiered student support systems, tutoring initiatives, embedded instructional supports, and personalized student support plans, HCPS is dedicated to ensuring every student has the resources necessary to thrive academically and personally. By leveraging data-driven approaches, engaging in collaborative partnerships, and offering a variety of implementation models, HCPS aims to empower students to achieve their full potential. The following dashboard is available for school teams for real-time data:



Despite challenges such as aligning support pathways with career and college readiness guideline changes and logistical hurdles, HCPS remains steadfast in providing tailored support to each student. Looking ahead, the integration of career-oriented counseling alongside academic support signals HCPS's continued commitment to holistic student development.

Plan #1 - Students engaged in individualized support plans based on the degree of MCAP proficiency *Progress* - A Tiered Student Support System was identified and later adapted as the pathway planning process proceeded, in partnership with the Student Support Pathway Workgroup. Additional pathway and resource options were added to initial plans which included opportunities related to SAT preparation. The use of Common Lit resources was also woven in to support instruction and assessment related to

English. Additional pathway options will be considered for students with IEPs. [Reference: Student Support Pathways Tier Chart](#)

- *Challenges* - Providing support pathways for students who are career-oriented vs. college-oriented is a challenge as the current standard is academic based. The coordinating team will consider ways to align support pathways with career and college counseling during the upcoming revision process. Inconsistency with state and Blueprint requirements (e.g., the absence of career-oriented CCR measures, and lack of alignment with graduation requirements – specifically, MCAP) is a significant challenge. Additional staff are required to adequately identify, implement, and monitor support pathway services at the school level. Increased workload pressure on school test coordinators was also experienced due to the inherent retesting requirements.

Plan #2 - Tutoring: low to high-dose tutoring was made available to all high schools utilizing FEV Tutor. See question 13 for more detail on this option. While FEV Tutor was the prime vehicle for the delivery of services, schools were provided multiple implementation options.

Progress - A higher tutoring participation rate occurred when implemented during the school day. Initial findings suggest that the focus on support pathways and related CCR communication is altering perceptions of the importance of MCAP testing [Reference: Student Support Pathway Letter](#)

- *Challenges* – Creating an intrinsic desire for students and families to buy into the importance of CCR with exams that at present have no consequence or impact on graduation is a challenge. CCR requirements are not in alignment with graduation requirements.

Plan #3 - Embedded instructional supports were identified to support students not meeting the CCR standard.

- *Progress* - Within Geometry, Algebra I content was spiraled/merged to provide students with additional learning experiences focused on critical Algebra I content. FEV Tutor was embedded into select English 11 sections for students requiring pathway support.
- *Challenges* – Embedding instructional supports reflecting prior year content, presents a challenge in meeting current year content demands.

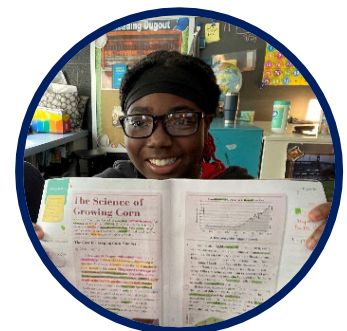
Plan #4 - Standalone immersion coursework was considered as a support for students who have not met the standard.

- *Progress* - Students who did not earn credit in either Math or English 10, repeated the course for original credit. Those students who earned course credit, but did not meet the proficiency MCAP score, were provided tutoring options. While immersion coursework was initially considered, it was determined that immersion course reflected a challenge that could not be overcome, therefore immersion coursework was not provided. Partner connections with Harford Community College were identified, but not infused into the first phase of the work.
- *Challenges* – For our most struggling students, adding additional immersion coursework within the school day further limits career-oriented opportunities and potentially places students further behind in meeting other graduation requirements. Creating novel interventions during the school day that do not impede or compete with required coursework is a challenge.

Plan #5 - Individualized student support plans were developed and implemented based on the unique needs of each student.

- *Progress*
 - A CCR data dashboard was created to identify, monitor, and track the performance of students. The dashboard was used by an array of individuals involved with the support pathway project. See Page 69, for dashboard.

Central Office personnel met with all high school administrative teams to provide support and guidance, before and during the planning, implementation, and reflection phases.



- CCR Coordinators were identified at each school. These individuals assisted in identifying students, implementing plans, conducting student conferences, communicating with families, identifying student support schedules, and monitoring participation and performance.
- A variety of models were identified to provide schools with maximum flexibility in meeting the unique needs of each school community.

A pathway guidance document was developed to provide schools with background and implementation direction. **Reference:** [Student Support Pathway Guide](#)

- All high schools provided context and background to all parents/guardians and students regarding CCR requirements.
- Communication with parents of students who missed support sessions took place to encourage further participation.
- Student meetings took place to counsel students identified for a support pathway.

A variety of data sources were used to construct individualized support plans. Data included MCAP scores, Algebra I final exam data, and CommonLit English assessment scores. Services provided by FEV Tutor included the development of individualized support plans based on these data sources, aligned to the MARYLAND College and Career Ready Standards. **Reference:** [FEV Available Data Samples](#)

A variety of professional development sessions were planned and delivered before and during the implementation phase. This professional support was provided to school-based administration, CCR Coordinators, and select teachers. **Reference:** [Student Support Pathway Comprehensive Overview](#)

- Progress monitoring took place at both the county and school level during implementation
- Post-pathway implementation meetings took place at high schools with leadership teams, and with Mathematics and English department chairs. Qualitative feedback related to pathway program strengths and challenges was sought, in addition to suggestions for the future.

Challenges

- For schools that incorporated after school options, challenges related to student buy-in parental/guardian buy-in, and transportation were identified.
- Additional staffing is needed to provide adequate support to schools
- Fluctuations and uncertainty in the definition of CCR poses ongoing challenges. Consistency and stability with the accountability model is needed to build momentum.
- When previous content is embedded into existing coursework, balancing unfinished learning with new learning is a challenge, reflecting content management and pacing concerns.
- Additional implementation models are needed which support students with disabilities.
- Identifying how to integrate career-oriented services to enhance student buy-in is a need.
- FEV Tutor services were exclusively virtual and interest in opportunities for face-to-face tutoring has been expressed as a need. This raises financial and personnel challenges.
- The number of students needing support pathway services (due to interim standard) was a challenge from an implementation and monitoring standpoint.
- Retesting students resulted in a significant logistical challenge at the county and school levels.
- The speed at which MCAP retesting data is received is a challenge. It does not afford additional phases of academic support to be implemented before the next test administration window.

Data Analysis: HCPS has just received the fall 2024 MCAP retesting data (April 2024) reflecting student performance retesting in Algebra I, Algebra II, and English 10. Based on recently released (April 2024) MCAP scores from fall/winter testing this year, we continue to see the difficulty with students passing either Algebra I or Algebra II. The Student Support Pathway leadership group is now identifying data patterns and trends to determine the extent to which current support pathways impacted student performance. This in-depth analysis will support the identification of changes and enhancements to the student support pathway program for the 2024-25 school year. Several key study questions include, but are not limited to:

- What are the contributing factors that supported students in meeting CCR upon retesting?

- For students who did not meet CCR upon retesting, what growth was observed and what conclusions may be drawn regarding the impact support pathways had on performance? What other supports may be needed?
- What is the correlation between the number of individualized tutoring sessions and MCAP growth?
- How did time of day influence student participation rate in pathways?
- How does growth on MCAP compare to those who did and did not participate in a support pathway?
- To what extent is individualized tutoring under the current model a viable option for the future?

Algebra I

- 1,682 students tested in the fall block of this year who also took this same test last year.
- 119 out of the 1,682 earned a proficient/advanced score (7.1%).
- The mean score for the Dec/Jan 2024 administration was 733.
- The mean score for these same students who tested in April 2023 was 731. Therefore, the mean score increased by 2 points.

Algebra II

- 618 students tested in the fall block of this year who also took this same test last year.
- 60 students out of the 618 earned a proficient/advanced score (9.7%).
- The mean score for the Dec/Jan 2024 administration was 737.
- The mean score for these same students who tested in April 2023 was 734. This was an increase of 3 points.

English 10

- 844 students tested in the fall block of this year who also took this same test last year.
- 191 students out of the 844 earned a proficient/advanced score (22.6%).
- The mean score for the Dec/Jan 2024 administration was 742.
- The mean score for these same students who tested in April 2023 was 739. This was an increase of 3 points.

NEW For the 2024-25 school year, HCPS will explore integrating career-oriented counseling for students who are identified for a support pathway, in addition to academic support. The extent to which 2023-24 academic support services are replicated and expanded can now be vetted through our stakeholder processes with the newly released (April 2024) MCAP data provided above. Performance data will be carefully analyzed to determine the impact that 23-24 services had on student performance.

AIB Strategic Facilitator Findings regarding Student Support Pathway: The full analysis of the status and decision-making confronting HCPS regarding the student support pathway is available in the next reference link. The below represents key findings:

- The disconnect between graduation requirements and CCR eligibility has implied to students, staff, and families that MCAP results do not matter.
- Many students may have been unsuccessful on the MCAP because they did not try on the test – for these students, remediation is viewed as a waste of effort.
- There are meaningful disparities of need among schools that are not fully addressed through the tiered options of the current support pathway.
- Action items:
 - Clarify roles and responsibilities to ensure a smoother implementation process.
 - Ensure that the Student Support Pathway aligns with its intended goals.
 - Promote a strengths-based approach to addressing school and student needs.
 - Allocate additional staffing resources strategically to accelerate Blueprint outcomes within existing financial constraints.

XV. Access to Post-CCR Pathways

Initial Blueprint Implementation Plan Reference: Questions 118-122 and 128-133

In March 2023, the LEA discussed how it would ensure every student has access to post-CCR pathways, including college preparatory programs (IB Diploma Programme, Cambridge AICE

Diploma Program, and Advanced Placement Program), dual enrollment programs, middle and early college high school programs, and CTE programs that include opportunities for apprenticeships and other industry-recognized credentials. The LEA's response included descriptions of current offerings and proposed expansion plans if applicable, strategies to recruit student representative of the school system's demographics and plans to overcome barriers for student enrollment such as transportation, scheduling, entry requirements, or inadequate academic support. Based on implementation of the LEA's plans over the last year, discuss the district's progress in transforming its systems and practices and achieving the intended outcomes of the Blueprint. Responses must address the following questions.

- What progress has been made in implementation related to both planned activities and anticipated outcomes? If progress has been limited, what challenges has the LEA encountered? Consider, identify, and refer to available data as needed to demonstrate progress.
- How is the LEA adapting its plans to mitigate challenges and/or ensure continued progress and future success? Which strategies are not working that the LEA will no longer implement, and which new strategies does the LEA intend to implement? Include the rationale for adjustments.

Criteria for Success

- Identifies highest priority areas and/or strategies discussed in the March 2023 submission and provides detailed updates related to progress, including identifying challenges where progress has been limited.
- Identifies and provides the rationale for new/revised strategies, activities, and/or outcomes that have been developed or revised since the 2023 submission.
- Discusses how specific feedback provided for the 2023 submission has been addressed if applicable.
- Provides specific examples of revised policies or practices that lead to increased access to post-CCR pathways for all students, including those participating in a CCR support pathway

HCPS has a Career-driven focus for all students in post-CCR pathways.

HCPS's transition towards a career-driven focus, highlighted in the system-wide response at the front of this plan and exemplified by the North Star Initiative, has fundamentally reshaped the educational landscape, providing students with diverse career pathways towards success. By emphasizing the importance of both college preparatory coursework and career credentials, HCPS has not only expanded opportunities for students but also promoted educational equity and improved long-term outcomes. The partnership with Harford Community College (HCC) has particularly accelerated this shift, facilitating increased access to dual enrollment courses and industry certifications, thereby allowing students to graduate high school with up to a year of college credit. **Reference:** [HCC Relationship Map](#)

These concerted efforts have not only refined priorities within the school system but have also empowered students, cultivated equity, and positioned them for success in the workforce. **Reference:** [ILT CCR Data Presentation Feb.2024](#); [CCR Status Data - New Definition Update 3.2024](#). A dashboard is available for school teams for real-time data to track student outcomes and access to advanced coursework (AP, IB, Dual Enrollment), CTE pathways, and industry recognized credentials. Looking forward, HCPS will enhance its career-driven approach through project-based learning, career exploration curriculum, and the integration of future-ready skills, ensuring continued progress.

***NEW* Future Ready Skills:** HCPS and our local workforce investment board, SWN, are collaborating on an initiative to integrate Future Ready Skills into middle and high school curriculum, programming, and career coaching. The goal is to align education with workforce demands and empower students for their future careers. A selected vendor will conduct curriculum analysis, develop teacher and counselor/coaching materials, and create implementation and assessment plans. Upon selection, a vendor will analyze the current curriculum, identifying areas for improvement and embedding future-ready skills seamlessly. They will create implementation strategies for skill integration into HCPS middle and high schools. Assessment plans will measure student proficiency and inform future enhancements, ensuring HCPS is at the forefront of career-oriented education and serving the future needs of every student. An RFP will be released in the Spring 2024 for this joint initiative.

***NEW* Career Compass:** In addition, the CTE office will offer a 7th grade choice course titled “Career Compass” in 2024-2025. This will allow students an opportunity for self-discovery about their interests and beginning to formulate a plan for some of their career interests. This would allow for students to explore all areas of CTE career clusters and will align the clusters and content to areas within our comprehensive, signature and magnet program offerings in Harford County Public Schools. This endeavor will be to build upon the work that counselors accomplish in Naviance and the work of Career Coaches with our local workforce development board.

NEW HCPS is currently exploring more middle school opportunities for students to explore college. For example, starting this spring, 7th grade students will have a field trip to Harford Community College to learn about the campus and dual enrollment. HCPS is also exploring resources such as Skills USA to be used during a middle school advisory period beginning in 2024-2025. Also, as noted in question #130, the CTE Office actively informs families and students of the various apprenticeship opportunities available.

The following represents HCPS updates to the 2022-2023 Blueprint plan:

2022 2023 Plan	Progress and Adaptations		
Magnet programs for advanced preparation	HCPS has had an increase in Magnet Program applications. As part of Perkins V, local LEAs are required to conduct a Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment for Career and Technology Education. The needs are then used to provide our programs with equitable access to instructional materials and equipment to support programs.		
AP & IB	There have been no significant changes with our Advanced Placement and IB programs. <i>Reference:</i> AP Data Enrollments 4.2024		
Industry-recognized credentials	HCPS continues to expand certifications that align to our magnet programming. Examples are Java certification for the Oracle Academy students at Havre de Grace High School (HDHS) and the Teacher Academy of Maryland (TAM) program students' certification in ParaPro. Note, OSHA 10 is not being offered in 2023-2024 as it has not been determined if this will be considered a recognized credential by MSDE. Costs remains a challenge. Although there is a local budgetary line item to cover a portion of the costs, it cannot address the goal of all magnet programs aligned to receiving credentials. SWN is assisting by paying for Sophomores to take Database certification testing for the Oracle Academy at HDHS. 30-40 students from that program will now earn an industry recognized credential. As another example, we would like to offer the sophomores at Harford Technical High School the opportunity to take the CompTIA IT Fundamentals (ITF+) certification.		
The Harford Youth Workforce Investment Program	The Harford Youth Workforce Investment program continues to expand. This year 90+ students have taken non-credit coursework at Harford Community College, which can lead to industry recognized credentials at the conclusion of the courses. Next year, 2024-2025 the Harford Youth Workforce Investment Program will add four non-credit courses in Allied Health and will have a target goal of 130+ students being a part of the program. *NEW* HCPS has secured funding through SWN for the next two years.		
	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction Skills • Logistics (Supply Chain) Professional plus optional Forklift training • Office Job Skills • Introduction to Social Media Marketing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction: NCCER Core Curriculum • Certified Logistics Associate and Certified Logistics Technician plus optional Forklift training • Microsoft Office Certification • Communications • Windows Computer Support Technician • Help Desk (Security+) • Linux+ • Certified Nursing Assistant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction: NCCER Core Curriculum • Certified Logistics Associate and Certified Logistics Technician plus optional Forklift training • Microsoft Office Certification • Communications • Windows Computer Support Technician • Help Desk (Security+) • Linux+ • Certified Nursing Assistant • Dental Assistant • Emergency Medical Technician • Medical Office Assistant

2022 2023 Plan	Progress and Adaptations
Additional positions within the Office of CTE	<p>The Teacher Apprenticeship and Workforce Development Specialists have been implemented in each building with funding from the Maryland Works Grant. They have expanded the reach of acquiring apprentices through classroom visits and their daily presence within their assigned building(s). Through their work, we currently have over 125 student apprenticeships and over 110 businesses involved in our HCPS Apprenticeship Maryland Program. Students from a Geographic Information Systems (GIS) class created a heat map representing all the businesses throughout Harford County. Reference: Apprenticeship Heat Map</p>
Access to Apprenticeship Opportunities & the Maryland Works grant	<p>HCPS was awarded the one-million-dollar Maryland Works Grant. As a result, 7 Teacher Specialist and Workforce Development positions were advertised and filled. This allowed all schools to have representation throughout the week and an avenue to develop relationships with students.</p> <p>The goals of the Maryland Works grant are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10% of graduating seniors of FY 2025 will participate in a registered youth apprenticeship that leads to industry-recognized credential. Students receive a Maryland State Skill Certificate upon graduation which is a credential. <i>Approximately, 5% of the goal has been met with HCPS' current totals of 125 apprentices.</i> • Apprenticeship Specialist will work to ensure each HCPS High School will have a minimum of 10 students participating by the end of FY 2024. <i>Each school has an apprentice. Several schools have reached the 10-student mark.</i> • HCPS will work with current partners and recruit to have 75 regional businesses confirmed as Apprenticeship Opportunities by the end of FY 2024 <i>HCPS has 110 business partnerships and has achieved this goal.</i> <p>Update to Scheduling/Access: To allow for greater access, we currently are piloting juniors at CMW and NHHS on part-time schedules. These students replace elective courses with Apprenticeship course numbers (so they have a course scheduled in each block) which allows them to go part-time if approved through the Student Enrollment Options process. We have been fortunate to have Juniors work after-school and over the summer for attainment of an apprenticeship. With flexible scheduling and the inclusion of more schools allowing Juniors to go on a part-time schedule, this will increase apprenticeship opportunities. Reference: Sample Student Apprenticeship Schedules</p>
Early College: Students have the necessary support to participate and successfully earn college credits and diplomas	<p>With HCC as our partner for PTECH coursework, the college was able to set up a Blackboard dedicated specifically to PTECH students. It is a way for students to see announcements, as well as assistance with advising. They are to check in Blackboard daily. We had a great orientation in August with the incoming freshmen class that was held here at HCC. We are also looking at an exciting year with our first graduating class. We have 10 students slated to graduate this spring from the PTECH program. The PTECH program coordinator holds quarterly meetings with families for feedback and extends the invitation to HCC to support program growth to meet the needs of students. A dedicated Teaching Assistant was hired to provide all day support for students. This will be funded by both Perkins as well as HCPS. HCPS has investigated P-Tech expansion into other schools and learned that legislation would be needed to allow a second PTECH School.</p> <p>For the Teacher Academy of Maryland (TAM) early college program, TAM+, of the students offered participation, all 23 students were able to pass their first course in Early College. *NEW* TAM will also be offering a new site for the 2024-2025 school year. Incoming 9th graders will be attending North Harford High School (NHHS). The program will remain the same at Edgewood. Harford Technical High School (HTHS) will continue to host the promoted 10th -12th graders until the Class of '27 graduates. The move to NHHS is significant as the middle and elementary schools (feeder schools) are in close proximity, which is a great opportunity for TAM students.</p>

2022 2023 Plan	Progress and Adaptations										
<p>Dual Enrollment: Students have the necessary support to participate and successfully earn college credits and diplomas</p>	<p>Dual Enrollment: Students considering Dual Enrollment must meet with a school counselor to discuss options and review our Student Education Planning Guide. Admission requirements and benefits are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently enrolled as a junior or as a senior with at least 16 credits. • Meets the CCR standard as determined by MSDE. • Meet pre-requisites as determined by HCC. • Students who meet the CCR requirements may enroll in courses at no cost with a maximum of five total courses per academic year. • Students who are unsuccessful in earning credit in the dual enrollment program are ineligible for tuition payment for two consecutive college terms. • Students who earn a failing final grade in a dual enrollment course(s) are accountable for the associated tuition and fees of the respective course(s). • Dually enrolled students who withdraw from a course(s) beyond the penalty free withdraw period will be accountable for the associated tuition and fees. <p>Students who do not meet the CCR standard must meet the following requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently enrolled as a junior in the third-year cohort or as a senior in the fourth-year cohort with at least 16 credits. • Have a 2.0 unweighted GPA. • Have a minimum of 90% attendance - current and the prior school year. • Meet pre-requisites as determined by the IHE. • If the minimum standards are not met students may be approved to enroll but will not qualify for tuition assistance. <p>References: Student Enrollment Options; Approved Dual Credit Courses; General Dual Enrollment information (including costs); Dual Enrollment Communication Tools; Dual Enroll Parent Guide Feb.2024</p> <p>The following represents our increase in demand for dual enrollment courses:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="431 1096 808 1289"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2">Dual Enrolled Courses</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2022</td> <td>1754</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2023</td> <td>2222</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2024</td> <td>3393</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2025 Projection</td> <td>4500</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Dual Enrolled Courses		2022	1754	2023	2222	2024	3393	2025 Projection	4500
Dual Enrolled Courses											
2022	1754										
2023	2222										
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2025 Projection	4500										
<p>Funding to support programs</p>	<p>In addition to being awarded the \$1 million Maryland Works Grant, HCPS received over \$16,000 to support Robotics Teams and over \$39,000 from the Maryland Center for Computing Education. This funding assists continuous improvements of teacher education programs for computer science in K-12. The funds will be used to support summer/ school year PD for teachers and additional planning meetings to develop a sustainable Computer Science program that reaches all students. As an example, our middle school Teachers will gain professional development for Microbit, JavaScript, and Python in the summer to support our Computer Science choice track to support the Middle School Innovation Program offering more choices for student learning. Reference: MD Works Grant Press Release</p>										
<p>Communication & Outreach</p>	<p>Activities are ongoing in the 2023-2024 school year.</p>										

AIB Strategic Facilitator Findings regarding Post CCR Pathways: The full analysis of the status and decision-making confronting HCPS regarding post-CCR pathways is available in the link below. The following represents a sample of key findings: **Reference:** [CCR Listening Tour Report Draft 04.24](#)

Post CCR Pathways	Key Findings
Dual Enrollment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HCPS students are successful in dual enrollment course-taking, but barriers to access (CCR eligibility, transportation, instructor availability) may mask the overall success of this initiative. • Demand for dual enrollment is outstripping the supply of qualified instructors. • Students who are academically qualified for dual enrollment may not be developmentally qualified to be successful.
The Workforce Investment Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An increase in noncredit industry certifications for students is desired. • There is a question around whether this program is to connect students to workforce opportunities that provide a living wage, or if it is a work-study dropout prevention initiative.
Apprenticeship Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The apprenticeship program is universally valued, with exponential growth. • There are concerns about scalability and where the ceiling for business partnerships might emerge. • The support staff associated with the apprenticeship programs are well qualified and making observable connections between students and businesses. • The requirement for all opportunities to align with Department of Labor areas is limited to the interests of students.
Partnership with HCC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executive-level staff share goals and a commitment for the partnership. • The sudden increase in volume of HCPS students in HCC courses has strained systems for both organizations.
Shortfalls in Meeting Students' Needs Equitably	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English language learners and students with disabilities struggle to access all Pillar 3 initiatives, including the Student Support Pathway. • Transportation inhibits equitable access to Pillar 3 opportunities. • Inconsistent access to dual enrollment experiences (e.g., personally designed AA programs for some in the comprehensive high schools, in-person instruction vs. asynchronous virtual instruction) exacerbates equity challenges. • School counselors may not be positioned to simultaneously manage dual enrollment responsibilities with crisis response responsibilities in schools with large opportunity gaps among students.
Enthusiasm for Progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The vision for Pillar 3 and the North Star is universally valued. • There is an appreciation for current effort and an optimism that implementation will be a positive, yet iterative process.
Visioning for the Future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students and families need effective communication to understand the universe of opportunities available to them. • Career-readiness should remain an emphasis, with a focus on expanding the breadth of work-based learning opportunities for more students. • Vertical alignment of K-12 Pillar 3 efforts will improve student experiences. • Additional staffing would accelerate Blueprint outcomes for students, but financial limitations are widely understood.

Action items from the analysis findings:

- Clarify roles and responsibilities to ensure a smoother implementation process.
- Allocate additional staffing resources strategically to accelerate Blueprint outcomes within existing financial constraints. Address concerns about sustainability.
- Mitigate the perceived impact of students leaving campus on school culture.
- Consider the shortage of qualified instructors for dual enrollment courses.
- Improve access to Pillar 3 initiatives for English language learners and students with disabilities.
- Consider transportation challenges to ensure equitable access to Pillar 3 opportunities.

PILLAR 4

XVI. Engagement & Communication: Multilingual Learner families

Initial Blueprint Implementation Plan Reference: Question 137

In March 2023, the LEA described how it would engage and communicate with Multilingual learner (ML) families, also known as English learners (EL), including leveraging the EL family coordinator position. Based on implementation of the LEA's plans over the last year, discuss the district's progress in transforming its systems and practices and achieving the intended outcomes of the Blueprint. Responses must address the following questions.

- What progress has been made in implementation related to both planned activities and anticipated outcomes? If progress has been limited, what challenges has the LEA encountered? Consider, identify, and refer to available data as needed to demonstrate progress.
- How is the LEA adapting its plans to mitigate challenges and/or ensure continued progress and future success? Which strategies are not working that the LEA will no longer implement, and which new strategies does the LEA intend to implement? Include the rationale for adjustments.

Criteria for Success

- Identifies highest priority areas and/or strategies discussed in the March 2023 submission and provides detailed updates related to progress, including identifying challenges where progress has been limited.
- Identifies and provides the rationale for new/revised strategies, activities, and/or outcomes that have been developed or revised since the 2023 submission.
- Discusses how specific feedback provided for the 2023 submission has been addressed if applicable.
- Explains how the EL family coordinator will be strategically utilized to engage with Multilingual learner families.

HCPS is committed to working with all families for student success.

Progress: HCPS has maintained a subscription to CTS Language Link, a telephonic service that provides 24-hour interpretation services to all school sites and personnel. Additionally, CTS Language Link provides translation services that may be required or needed. HCPS has also maintained a subscription to TransAct translation services, which provides additional online translation of generic district documents.

Teachers have continued to utilize Talking Points, the free version of the application, as an additional service to communicate with students and families. They are able to utilize this software on their telephonic and computer devices.

Additionally, HCPS continues to work with our business/community partners to provide translation and interpretation services (both in-person, virtual, and telephonic), paid by the HCPS curriculum office and other offices, as well as connections to community-based programs for students, families, and staff. HCPS has a long-standing Memorandum of Understanding with Linking All So Others Succeed (LASOS) as well as agreements with various other vetted translation/interpretation companies, to provide ongoing advocacy and support for parents new to the United States through classes, individualized translation services, and assistance with registration/paperwork.

The EL Department has continued to provide registration documentation translation services with the support of our vetted translation companies and recommend courses for credit transfer within the transcripts. **Reference:** [Translation Activities](#)

NEW HCPS has completed a Request for Proposal (RFQ) process (1-31-2024) in which several translation/interpretation companies were reviewed for the school system to build a bank of available

translators/interpreters who would be able to meet the school system needs as our non-native English population continues to experience exponential growth. Having a variety of services available allows the school system to expand our translation/interpretation efforts so that we may be able to communicate with those who speak other languages beyond Spanish, French, and/or German. [Reference: EL Needs Assessment for Services](#)

The EL Department continues to partner with the Title I office and SPA coordinators to ensure that multilingual learners and their families within Title I schools receive communication and outreach that supports academic growth. Both school-based and countywide opportunities have helped to enhance parental/student involvement in the Title I schools. These parent events have coincided with the departmental initiative to invite parents in for student-led conferences and EL Block Parties. The EL Department has continued to offer and provide enhanced training opportunities for all HCPS staff. [Reference: EL PD Sample – EDMS](#)

Challenges: HCPS has continued efforts to develop a standard definition of “bilingual” so that staff know the criteria that is considered by the county when effectively communicating in a language other than English. HCPS also awaits direction and standard setting from MSDE to align with expectations of bilingualism and biliteracy. Standards of proficiency, on a local level, will be suggested, as well as resources that staff can utilize to improve their second language proficiency.

Budgetary constraints continue to impede the development of the Office of Interpreting and Translation. Additionally, HCPS does not have a set standard for ‘bilingual’ and/or ‘biliterate,’ as the state has not yet clearly defined these terms. Not only will this action work to standardize our translations/interpretations, HCPS will also be able to offer translations/interpretations in languages other than Spanish.

Future: *NEW* As we move forward in the development of an elementary immersion program, we will be focusing on native to near-native proficiency in the second language. Eligible candidates will be expected to complete a proficiency assessment to establish a local standard of proficiency. [References: Language Immersion EMES - BOE Presentation; Language Programs - BOE Presentation](#)

The EL Department intends to utilize the vetted bank of interpreters/translators to meet the growing demands of the school system. The EL Department plans to investigate opportunities for current staff to assess their level of second language proficiency. By doing this, the school system will be able to build a bank of in-house interpreters/translators to avoid the need to outsource and contract with agencies.

EL family coordination: Currently, HCPS coordinates efforts related to multilingual learners and their families through the collaboration of the Supervisor of World Languages and English Learner Programs and with EL teachers, business partners, schools, and other school system departments. Requests for workshops, seminars, translations/interpretations, and family engagement activities all come through the EL Department.

If HCPS moves forward with establishing a specific position for an EL Family Coordinator, this person will assume the responsibilities of coordinating resources for parents/families. The primary responsibility of this individual would be to establish a network of resources, both within the school system and in the community, for parents/families, coordinate requests for translation/interpretation, provide specific professional development to HCPS staff, and serve as a liaison for developing and/or family engagement activities as well as providing pertinent information to our multilingual learners and their families.



Currently, HCPS coordinates efforts related to multilingual learners and their families through the collaboration of the EL teachers within their assigned schools serving as a facilitator between the families and the school. When services are required and/or needed, the EL teacher or school personnel will reach out to the Supervisor

of World Languages and English Learner Programs to coordinate resources. Resources may include business partners, other HCPS departments and/or services, professional development, family workshops, seminars, translations/interpretations, and any additional family engagement activities requested. **Reference:** [EL Newsletter Sample](#)

NEW Family outreach, connections, involvement, and education is planned to be enhanced through regional “block parties” that will serve as a way to help parents to learn how to navigate the expectations of the school system, the schools, and teachers. Family engagement activities are an area of general need throughout the county. EL specific activities for families is an identified area of needed growth as the EL population continues to grow each school year.

XVII. Supporting Multilingual Learners & Increasing Language Acquisition

Initial Blueprint Implementation Plan Reference: Questions 138-139

In March 2023, the LEA described how it would support Multilingual learners (ML), also known as English learners (EL) and implement the recommendations of the ML workgroup to increase English proficiency for ML students. Responses included strategies to increase language acquisition and ensure the alignment and investment of resources. Based on implementation of the LEA’s plans over the last year, discuss the district’s progress in transforming its systems and practices and achieving the intended outcomes of the Blueprint. Responses must address the following questions.

- What progress has been made in implementation related to both planned activities and anticipated outcomes? If progress has been limited, what challenges has the LEA encountered? Consider, identify, and refer to available data as needed to demonstrate progress.
- How is the LEA adapting its plans to mitigate challenges and/or ensure continued progress and future success? Which strategies are not working that the LEA will no longer implement, and which new strategies does the LEA intend to implement? Include the rationale for adjustments.
- **Required Data Analysis:** Through an analysis of data, discuss progress towards meeting the Blueprint Outcome of increasing English proficiency for Multilingual learner students.

Criteria for Success

- Identifies highest priority areas and/or strategies discussed in the March 2023 submission and provides detailed updates related to progress, including identifying challenges where progress has been limited.
- Identifies and provides the rationale for new/revised strategies, activities, and/or outcomes that have been developed or revised since the 2023 submission.
- Discusses how specific feedback provided for the 2023 submission has been addressed if applicable.
- Provides analysis of English proficiency data to identify find trends in proficiency and lack of proficiency, including disaggregated by student groups, and describes instructional changes to improve Multilingual learner students’ English proficiency and how progress will be monitored.

HCPS is committed to individualized support for all students.

Progress: The EL Department at HCPS has maintained its commitment to delivering job-embedded and ongoing professional development (PD), with a focus on leveraging the strengths of multilingualism and improving outcomes for English Learners (EL’s) and the EL community across our county. This PD aligns with WIDA and English development standards. The department has expanded its high-quality tutoring services during the school day, employing nine tutors funded through Title III. Additionally, the department has strengthened its partnership with Towson University in North Eastern Maryland (TUNE), contributing to local teacher preparation programs geared towards working with EL’s.

In curriculum development efforts, the EL Department works collaboratively with other content areas, such as Reading Language Arts and Social Sciences, to integrate research-based strategies for English language development. For example, the EL Department continues collaboration with the Pre-K program, ensuring that private providers are equipped with the knowledge of language development, acquisition, literacy, and EL identification. ***NEW*** HCPS is actively preparing to launch of a Spanish immersion program in the 24-25 school year, initially targeting one elementary school with 40 kindergarten students, including both EL and native English-speaking students through a DoDEA 5-year WLARP grant.

References: [Language Immersion EMES - BOE Presentation](#)

HCPS continues to provide teachers access to Learning A-Z enhanced with Raz-Plus, Science A-Z, and the ELL edition. Raz-Plus ELL provides several research-based resources and teaching strategies specifically designed for helping English language learners achieve success with social and academic English. Available with the subscription to Raz-Plus, Raz-Plus ELL resources are organized in content area topics at varying grade ranges and include integrated grammar and vocabulary support. This program:

- Provides content-based and thematic-based resources that develop English speaking, listening, writing, and reading skills.
- Develops and introduces academic and social vocabulary.
- Correlates instruction to various ELL curriculum standards.
- Tracks progress with grade-appropriate assessments.

Raz-Plus ELL correlates to WIDA, TESOL, and ELPA1 standards, as its resources are designed to ensure that every lesson addresses critical language learning needs. Raz-Plus ELL provides a wealth of targeted ELL resources to guide ELLs in practicing key speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills. These resources include:

- Leveled Reader Packs that structure vocabulary, grammar, speaking and writing support with engaging texts and multi-day lesson plans.
- Content Picture Packs that help students learn essential vocabulary with colorful, detailed illustrations and guided lesson plans.
- Vocabulary Books that develop students' Tier 2 and 3 academic and social language skills.
- Assessments that track students' language learning progress and provide in-depth information about students' development in speaking, reading, listening, and writing.
- Language Skill Packs that offer content-based materials to support student progress in math, foundational skills, science, language arts, social studies, and social and instructional language.
- Vocabulary Power Packs provide digital activities where students practice content-based vocabulary with clear definitions, engaging images, and discussion questions that encourage making real-world connections.



Raz-Plus ELL allows the EL teachers to take advantage of dynamic reading activities that reinforce social language learning. Equipped with Project-Based Learning Packs, Close Reading Packs, and Comprehension Skill Packs, these supplemental resources are ideal for student collaboration by encouraging critical reading and discussion of possible solutions to a reading-related problem.

HCPS believes that it is essential to forge partnerships with students and families. In order to assist with building partnerships and networks that provide our families with outreach services, and networks, the school system has continued with its established partnership with LASOS. As a result of the partnership with LASOS, HCPS is able to enlist language support to students, families, and schools. This partnership is directly linked to the EL Summer Camp, established in 2021, held within the school system for any student, K-12, who is an English Learner. In the summertime, students gather for a month-long summer camp opportunity that supports their academic gains, as well as introduces them to how they can be active in the community and how the community can be active in their lives. This provides a safe environment for school aged students during the summer that supports their academic and social development. The EL summer program offers diversified lessons, grounded in WIDA standards and

Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) that are appropriate for each age level. Special attention is paid to academic vocabulary, reading, and math skills, as well as leadership and character building. **Reference:** [EL Summer - BOE Presentation](#)

NEW ESOL I will be offered at the middle school for those non-native English speakers who meet eligibility requirements. **Reference:** [Language Programs - BOE Presentation](#)

NEW Two Spanish speaking Career Coaches have been hired and included in the Blueprint Career Coaching program to float between middle and high schools with EL's to ensure that these students benefit from meaningful career coaching. Susquehanna Workforce Network is also looking to invest in portable translators to provide career coaching to students speaking additional languages.

Challenges: Due to lack of programmatic funding, the EL Department has been unable to hire the additional planned EL teachers this last year. The EL Department will continue its plan to increase the number of staff to support EL's, including ESOL certified teachers. Although no additional staffing has been acquired, all available staffing has been reallocated to address pockets of need throughout the schools. There is a concentrated effort to implement those strategies that have been delayed. Of the schools with a high concentration of EL students, we have reallocated staff accordingly. When students have the support of full-time EL teachers throughout the day, students demonstrate growth socially as well as academically. ***NEW*** Despite anticipated local flat funding and reduction of teaching positions, the Superintendent has committed to adding 7 EL teachers next year, FY25.

Due to the increase of enrolled EL students and the range of supports needed, certified EL teacher caseloads will be redistributed and realigned to provide enhanced required services. We will aim to have at least one FTE EL teacher at high schools where enrollment of EL's is over 10. This will afford EL students the opportunity to take ESOL I and ESOL II for credit.

Plans to establish a high school ambassador program have been delayed. This effort is planned to begin roll-out with the 24-25 school year. This will be in partnership with our school counseling program and is planned to impact all schools with EL students. The EL Department will continue to investigate the feasibility of offering high school EL students the opportunity to have "work experience" release while also attending school. This would be an extension of the Swan Creek School. This effort has been delayed due to the impact of CCR, graduation, and assessment changes.

Data Analysis: The EL program's impact undergoes annual review, with student performance on the WIDA ACCESS assessment serving as a primary measure. HCPS consistently achieves an average exit rate of approximately 10% of identified EL students from direct EL support. As we analyze the 2023 data, we can clearly see a demographic shift within our EL population. The EL enrollment trend has created an opportunity to realize that most of our elementary EL students exit EL services by the 5th grade. Typically, when a child has participated in our EL program for approximately 4 years, they tend to exit services. In recent years we have been experiencing an influx of secondary EL students, especially students with interrupted education, which has impacted the % proficient as measured on WIDA ACCESS. For example, historically (2018) we have always had more elementary EL students than all of secondary, where the number of ELs in the secondary level only represented 30% of our EL population. As of this year (2024), our secondary population makes up 44% of our EL learners. Coupled with the 14% growth in the number of secondary ELs, the secondary level students that we have been entering are coming at older ages and less formal education. Within the data, we see the scores of each EL student who took WIDA ACCESS (2023) and the fact that many of our secondary students typically score at a lower proficiency than our elementary students. **Reference:** [MSDE Data File Tab 17, 17a](#)

To bridge the need for our secondary students, we have implemented ESOL 1 and 2 as a scheduling option for all middle schools (beginning 24-25) and high schools. Scheduling students with lower English proficiency a specific class to assist them with language acquisition has helped our secondary high

school students immensely. Therefore, we are extending ESOL 1 into middle schools. In addition to ESOL 1 and 2, we will continue to utilize EL tutors to work with students on the English proficiency.

As the EL student population in the district continues to grow, and staffing ratios exceed desired levels, the EL program intends to utilize Title III funds to offer additional academic and content supplemental tutorial services to EL's in grades K-12. These services, focusing on Reading/Language Arts, Math, Social Sciences, and Science, prioritize language use and development to enhance students' proficiency in reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Tutoring sessions take place during the school day, providing students with 1:1 or small group settings conducive to practicing and reinforcing language skills.

The expansion of student portfolios and student-led conferences is planned for the 2024-2025 school year, with an aim to double participation compared to the inaugural year. While countywide ELP data generally indicates satisfactory performance among EL's, specific schools face challenges in achieving ELP success. Secondary EL students struggle to meet proficiency on MCAP assessments, contrasting with elementary students who are meeting or exceeding expectations. [Reference: EL Portfolios & Student Led Conferences - 23-24](#)

Program Decisions: The EL Department will persist in using WIDA ACCESS data, alongside ESOL I and ESOL II enrollment and achievement metrics, to inform program decisions. Furthermore, the department has implemented, and will continue to develop, student portfolios, goal setting, and student-led conferences to engage students and parents in monitoring and tracking student growth. Qualitative student data will be integrated, recognizing the importance of student voice in refining portfolios and conferences. Professional Development data, gathered through feedback and surveys, underscore schools' and teachers' keen interest in acquiring fundamental understanding of working with EL's, delivering scaffolded lessons tailored to proficiencies, and effectively assessing students in content areas. The following are goals and actions identified by the EL Department:

GOAL	ACTIONS
Increase the percentage of EL's demonstrating growth in English language proficiency.	WIDA ACCESS data will be used to measure growth. 72% of assessed students will maintain or increase their overall English proficiency.
Increase the academic achievement of EL's.	Final report card data will be used to measure academic achievement. 80% of EL students issued a final report card will demonstrate academic success with no failing grades in the area of English/Language Arts for a final grade.
Provide effective PD for all educators that result in participants' use of new knowledge and skills for educating EL's.	Post-professional development evaluations will be completed by participants. 90% of participants will indicate that the professional development received met or exceeded their expectations.
Implement parent, family, and community engagement activities that result in improvement of English proficiency, academic achievement, and increased parental involvement.	Post-community engagement evaluations will be completed by participants. 90% of participants will indicate that the family engagement activities met or exceeded their expectations.
Align with one or more of the final recommendations in MSDE's Workgroup on English Learners in Public Schools Final Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and sustain Multilingualism through Asset-based Approach • Equitable Engagement & Communication with ML Families • Implementation of Instructional Programs to Support EL's • All teachers prepared to serve EL's. • Support with students with SLIFE • Equitable access to CCR curriculum and pathways.

XVIII. Improve Education for Students with Disabilities

Initial Blueprint Implementation Plan Reference: Questions 140-142

In March 2023, the LEA described how it would improve education for students with disabilities. Responses addressed supporting general and special education teachers in the implementation of effective classroom instructional practices and increasing and aligning investments in talent, time, and resources. Considerations included:

- Strategic staffing to implement a co-teaching model that allows for two teachers to share all responsibilities for a single classroom.
- Professional development to support all teachers in differentiating instruction effectively.
- Scheduling models to support collaboration and co-planning between general and special education teachers.

Based on implementation of the LEA's plans over the last year, discuss the district's progress in transforming its systems and practices and achieving the intended outcomes of the Blueprint. Responses must address the following questions.

- What progress has been made in implementation related to both planned activities and anticipated outcomes? If progress has been limited, what challenges has the LEA encountered? Consider, identify, and refer to available data as needed to demonstrate progress.
- How is the LEA adapting its plans to mitigate challenges and/or ensure continued progress and future success? Which strategies are not working that the LEA will no longer implement, and which new strategies does the LEA intend to implement? Include the rationale for adjustments.
- **Required Data Analysis:** Through an analysis of data, discuss progress towards meeting the Blueprint Outcome of improving education for students with disabilities.

Criteria for Success

- Identifies highest priority areas and/or strategies discussed in the March 2023 submission and provides detailed updates related to progress, including identifying challenges where progress has been limited.
- Identifies and provides the rationale for new/revised strategies, activities, and/or outcomes that have been developed or revised since the 2023 submission.
- Discusses how specific feedback provided for the 2023 submission has been addressed if applicable.
- Provides analysis of student outcome data to identify trends in achievement and lack of achievement for students with disabilities and describes instructional and programmatic changes to improve achievement and how progress will be monitored.
- Describes specific strategies from the list of considerations above to better support general and special education teachers.

HCPS is committed to individualized support for all students.

In March 2023, HCPS outlined systemic plans to improve education for students with disabilities. The plan outlined strategies aimed at reallocating talent, time, and resources and at improving the quality of instruction for special education (SE) students.

Strategies aimed at strategic staffing and scheduling include reducing/redefining case management responsibilities, re-allocating staff to allow for a full continuum of inside and outside of general education (GE) service delivery in every building and increasing specialized programming to create a more robust special education continuum county-wide. Increased collaboration with Executive Directors from the Educational Services Department has been instrumental in the progress made this year. In this first year of implementation, SE leadership has focused on strategies to ensure appropriate allocation of staff across buildings with a goal that all schools have the resources to provide a full continuum of inside and outside SE services. The following data shared with elementary principals in December 2023 highlights the need for this focus:

- 140 students transitioned from regional SE programs to kindergarten classrooms.
- 48 reviews for adult support were completed in preparation for the transition to kindergarten.
- Additional staff was allocated for 43 students transitioning to kindergarten, including 32 additional inclusion helpers, 2 additional paraeducators, and 2 SE teachers.

- Since the opening of the 23-24 school year through 12/15/23, the Office of SE received 56 requests for additional adult support and allocated 8 additional inclusion helpers, 5 additional paraeducators, and 2 additional teachers to elementary programs.

Historically, SE staffing has been determined using the programmatic ratios published in the [HCPS Staffing Manual](#). Feedback from building administrators and SE stakeholders, as well as the data presented above, supports the need for additional metrics to be utilized for the allocation of SE staff. For the 24-25 school year, SE leadership will utilize the Abbreviated Services Report in MDOonlineIEP to quantify the frequency and duration of both inside and outside SE services to more effectively allocate staff based on needs within each building. By considering the established student to teacher ratios and the nature, duration, and frequency of direct SE services within each building, all schools will be better equipped to provide a full continuum of service delivery in each building.

Currently, HCPS employs 117 inclusion helpers to provide additional adult support to individual students across all 55 schools. These staff are allocated using the current Student Assistance Needs (SANS) process by which a SE teacher specialist observes the student and completes a rubric identifying needs across multiple domains. The existing SANS process only accounts for students who require dedicated adult support throughout the entire day. Many schools also have students who require additional adult support for select periods of time or for specific subjects/classes. To assist SE teachers with evaluating a student's need for additional adult support, HCPS developed the Student's Level of Independent Functioning (SLIF). This is a survey to gather present levels of performance related to independent functioning within the school setting. Beginning with the 2023-2024 school year, a SLIF is required for all students who need additional adult support as a supplementary aid in the IEP. Year-end data from all submissions of the SLIF will be used to prioritize the allocation of individualized inclusion helpers and paraeducators at the building level. At the time of this report, 202 SLIF entries have been submitted with the expectation that by the end of the 23-24 school year, HCPS SE Leadership will have a submission for every enrolled student requiring adult support. This data will serve as an additional metric for the allocation of inclusion helpers and paraeducators and will assist in monitoring to ensure that adult support fades over time as students acquire higher levels of independence. With the newly established metrics to promote more effective allocation of staff at the building level, SE leadership expects to see at least a 10% reduction in requests for additional adult support (as of 2/15/24, 15 requests have been made from secondary schools and 68 from elementary schools).

LRE: Special ED. Placement as of Feb. 15, 2024	Student Count	Percents
(3-21): PUBLIC SEPARATE DAY SCHOOL	122	2.23%
(3-21): PRIVATE SEPARATE DAY SCHOOL	217	3.97%
(6-21): INSIDE GENERAL EDUCATION (>=80%)	4,637	84.91%
(6-21): INSIDE GENERAL EDUCATION (40%-79%)	218	3.99%
(6-21): INSIDE GENERAL EDUCATION (< 40%)	267	4.89%
(6-21): CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES	0	0.00%
TOTAL	5,461	100.00%

Ensuring that each building can provide a full continuum of SE services also requires that building administrators remain flexible in their expectations for scheduling of SE teachers. While the majority of SE services are provided in co-taught classrooms (4,637 students or 84.91% serviced in general education > 80%), schools must also have structures in place to meet the needs of individual students who require services outside of the GE setting (485 students or 8.9% receive services inside and outside of general education, <40% to 79%). This year, the Office of SE has worked directly with the Executive Director of Elementary Programs to consult with school-based teams facing critical needs. In bi-weekly meetings, a cross-departmental team reviews Requests for Behavior Specialist Support and collaborates to address high needs students/situations. Through this process, there has been a united effort to prioritize needs and to work directly with building administrators to effectively use resources allocated to their building. Positive outcomes from this work include the pilot of a transitional kindergarten classroom at Abingdon Elementary School which has a low student to teacher ratio and is staffed by both GE and SE certified

teachers. Differing from a traditional co-taught kindergarten classroom, this classroom offers small class size which allows for embedded social/emotional support and instruction throughout the day. Modeled after a program in Washington County, HCPS intends to continue to refine expectations and provide guidelines to principals who wish to incorporate a transitional classroom into their programming.



Similarly, at the secondary level, SE leadership is working with building administrators to establish guidelines for scheduling of SE staff and have highlighted individual schools who have designed a more efficient approach to scheduling SE teachers. Historically, secondary SE teachers have been assigned to GE cooperative and collaborative classes, limiting the availability of staff to provide SE services outside of the GE setting. As the needs of individual students require more flexible programming for the delivery of direct service both inside and outside of the GE setting, SE leadership is working with secondary building administrators to design guidelines that allow SE teachers the autonomy to design their schedules based upon the needs of the students that they serve. Bel Air High School has been highlighted as an HCPS secondary school that has taken an innovative approach to staff assignments. In the coming year(s), SE leadership intends to expand upon the work at Bel Air High School to promote a more flexible and efficient approach to the assignments of SE staff at secondary schools countywide.

In review of the strategies outlined in the March 2023 plan, HCPS continues to explore options for reducing/redefining case management responsibilities. Currently, HCPS SE teachers and related service providers receive a quarterly stipend for case management. While this additional stipend is appreciated, it does not address the need to reduce the extremely heavy case management responsibilities/workloads of HCPS special educators. Contract negotiations are in process and may result in additional planning time and/or additional compensation for SE teachers to complete case management responsibilities. Advocacy for these contract items was established before the negotiation window opened. In the coming years, additional strategies will need to be employed, such as use of clerical staff to support SE teachers with case management responsibilities, reallocation of case management responsibilities to designated support staff at the building level, and/or adding a building coordinator position to support compliance and to reduce scheduling and meeting coordination responsibilities. Budget constraints associated with local funding inhibit the significant shifts in staffing needed to address this need on a systemic level. A pilot of the above-mentioned strategies has not been established. This will be a priority for the 24-25 school year.

With a significant amount of work done this school year to enhance the decision-making process for staffing allocations at the building level, SE leadership also recognizes the need for increased specialized programming to address gaps in the HCPS SE continuum. Referrals to the Central IEP Team, as well as data collected through Requests for Behavior Specialist Support, have revealed a significant need regarding students who require verbal behavior methodology but do not require errorless learning which is a hallmark of the HCPS STRIVE program. [Reference: HCPS Autism Program Handbook](#)

Given the increasing number of students transitioning from early intervention programs, and the large number of Pre-K and kindergarten students who demonstrate significant deficits in language, self-regulation, and social/emotional development, SE leadership has identified increasing specialized programming to address the needs of students who have deficits in functional communication as the most critical need moving forward.

Previously, trends from Central IEP Team referrals suggested that expansion of the existing HCPS SE continuum should include programming to address elementary students who require specially designed instruction outside of the GE setting to address functional/adaptive skill development, secondary diploma bound students who require specially designed instruction to address functional/adaptive skill development, elementary and secondary students with severe dyslexia who have not responded favorably to Tier 3 instruction, and middle school students who need behavioral supports with opportunities to work in an alternate learning environment throughout the day. With significant needs in

Pre-Kindergarten and kindergarten classrooms throughout the county, HCPS is committed to reallocating resources to achieve increased opportunities for small class size and strategies to build capacity of staff to provide remediation/reteaching to promote functional communication and social emotional skill development within the comprehensive school setting.

Coordinated efforts are in development to provide the necessary resources to promote autonomy at the building level to design a continuum of service delivery models that work for individual schools. Principals have been presented with an overview of programmatic challenges and have been encouraged to consider piloting a differentiated approach to addressing SE needs at the building level. In the spring, projections for Pre-Kindergarten and kindergarten enrollment will be shared through individual meetings with select principals. At that time, HCPS will establish schools that need a transitional classroom for the 24-25 school year. SE leadership intends to expand the transitional classroom pilot (Pre-K, K and/or grade 1) by at least 3 schools. Challenges associated with this goal include staffing limitations based on budget constraints and sufficient space at the building level for additional classroom(s). A designated space within each building for small group instruction outside of the general education setting is also a challenge in many of our schools. Efforts are on-going to work with building administrators to establish appropriate instructional spaces for the delivery of special education services across a variety of settings.

In addition to the needs associated with establishing the space required for increases in specialized programming at the building level, there is significant work that must be done to design and provide professional development to build the capacity of SE staff. As reported in the March 2023 report, strategies aimed at improving the quality of instruction for special education students include: ensuring a full continuum of intervention is implemented with fidelity at every HCPS school; increasing opportunities for mentorship and coaching by highly qualified staff; establishing expectations and providing targeted professional development to both general education and special education teachers in the delivery of specially designed instruction using evidence based practices; and implementing strategies to promote a culture of co-evaluation, co-development, and co-implementation of IEP's.

With the addition of a SE Coordinator focused on training and technical assistance, HCPS has made strides in the design and delivery of high-quality professional development. The SE Coordinator of Training and Technical Assistance collaborates with the offices of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment (CIA) and Organizational Development (OOD) to design and implement county-wide professional development sessions that are targeted to the needs of the system. As an example, the Coordinator of Training and Technical Assistance is collaborating across departments to develop a system-wide symposium on Behavior that is expected to be delivered in the summer of 2024. In addition, OOD in collaboration with CIA have begun a systemic PD initiative to improve instruction using evidence informed practices utilizing Sherrington and Caveglioli's *Walk Thru 5-Step Guides*. OOD introduced these resources to principals and other system leaders in January with some schools beginning to pilot the resources in December. The use of these evidence-based resources will give HCPS a common language and clear and concise steps supported by research as to how to improve instruction.

NEW This year, the SE Leadership team has worked directly with the Supervisor of Title 1 programs to provide guidance to school-based teams through the School Performance and Achievement (SPA) process. In this work, SE leadership has worked directly with schools identified for Targeted Support and Improvement and Comprehensive Support and Improvement (TSI/CSI). Currently, 12 of 13 schools with this designation are working to increase the achievement of students with disabilities as a target group. While strategies across schools vary, there is consensus from many schools that small group instruction using evidence-based practices is the most powerful strategy for closing the achievement gaps. As evidenced by recent MCAP results, HCPS is beginning to see improvement with proficiency rates of students with disabilities. **Reference:** [MSDE Data File Tab 18](#)

% proficient on MCAP	English/Language Arts		Math	
				2023
Elementary	11.1%	11.7%	9.2%	10.1%
Middle	8.6%	13.3%	2.7%	3.4%
High	21%	17.1%	4.5%	4.8%

Data from the MSDE annual report on SPP/APR Part B Indicators aligns with the need for continued focus on building capacity of staff to deliver high quality specially designed instruction. As referenced in the chart above, and in data provided to HCPS by MSDE related to the performance of students on the alternate English Language Arts and Math assessments, SE leadership must also consider strategies for the implementation of high-quality instruction for students working toward a Certificate of Program Completion. Having not met any indicators associated with the proficiency rate for children with IEPs against alternate academic achievement standards, HCPS must focus efforts on increasing staff capacity to provide high quality instruction to all students receiving SE services.

Through collaboration with CIA and SE, HCPS strives to ensure that a full continuum of intervention is available to address the diverse needs of HCPS students with disabilities. The HCPS SE Leadership team regularly gathers and reviews data to evaluate the efficacy of Tier two and Tier three interventions used to provide specially designed instruction to students who have an IEP. Alignment between the methodology of specific interventions to the individual needs of each student is essential to accelerating student learning to ensure that all students are college and career ready by 10th grade. An on-going review of the existing HCPS interventions and exploration of additional programs has occurred this school year. The Office of SE continues to coordinate Orton-Gillingham + training through Bowman Educational Services. To date, HCPS has trained 182 certificated staff to deliver this Tier 3 intervention across all HCPS elementary and middle schools. In addition, HCPS is beginning a pilot of the IReady assessment platform. A pilot involving multiple schools is expected this spring with additional schools coming on board next year. In the coming school year, leadership within the department of Student Support Services intends to take a deep dive into the HCPS SST process to ensure that all schools are implementing the established expectations for Student Support Teams with fidelity. [Reference: SST Sample](#)

HCPS recognizes that co-teaching partners need to be content specialists and specialists in delivering specially designed instruction. In order to ensure that all students receive high quality instruction, HCPS Department of Special Education is committed to developing best practice documents which will include expectations for co-teaching in HCPS; providing building administrators with resources and “Look-Fors” to effectively evaluate the delivery of specially designed instruction within a co-taught classroom; and providing building administrators with “Look-Fors” and other resources to promote accessibility of all lessons and instructional materials. During the 23-24 school year, HCPS has made strides toward these goals. Various guidance documents are being drafted and vetted, and accessibility strategies are promoted in all Department Chair and SE Designee meetings where information is shared with representatives from each building. Anecdotal information gleaned from classroom observations and building walk-throughs show some evidence of the application of strategies promoted through departmental meetings. However, much work still needs to be done to ensure that all teachers consider and utilize accessibility features for every lesson.

Through collaboration with CIA and a shared vision that all content specific professional learning should model the expectations for differentiated learning to address individual needs, HCPS has committed to maintain a structure for targeted professional development that allows SE teachers to engage in content level professional development on district sponsored professional development days with their general education partners. This commitment is paramount in promoting a shared vision for inclusive opportunities across the county. In addition to this commitment, SE leadership has begun to work with CIA to establish expectations for the development of curriculum moving forward. With a collective goal to provide instructional resources to address EL and SE students across the county, CIA has committed to work toward including a framework for differentiated supports and curricular adaptations in curriculum writing moving forward.

In the 2023 Blueprint plan, HCPS proposed to establish a system to “certify” paraeducators in the delivery of researched based interventions with fidelity. As indicated in Pillar 3, HCPS provides a coherent plan to support staff responsible for reading and math instruction and intervention. At the elementary level, certified Specialists provide job embedded professional development of staff through modeling best practice, research-based instruction, co-teaching, instructional grade-level planning, data analysis, and peer coaching. Additional Specialists are deployed at priority elementary schools to provide intervention training and delivery, progress monitoring, and job-embedded professional development as specified above. At the middle school level, specialists provide the same means of job-embedded support to staff at our high priority schools. Teachers are afforded regular opportunities to plan grade-level instruction and to collaborate with the specialists in both elementary and middle school. Additionally, specialists provide training in specific, research-based interventions at the onset of the school year, monitor its implementation, and provide direct instruction as needed. SE paraeducators are often assigned to help deliver select interventions under the direct supervision of a certified Special Education teacher. Recognizing the varied skill sets of both SE teachers and paraeducators, HCPS needs to establish training protocols and a system to “certify” the paraeducators who are involved in the delivery of the HCPS approved intervention programs. There has not been substantial progress toward this goal during the 23-24 school year. On-going training for paraeducators is provided at the building level. A systemic certification program is still being considered.

HCPS recognizes the power of a team approach in which multiple service providers engage in the co-evaluation, co-development, and co-implementation of IEPs. In recent years, the Office of Special Education has provided professional development on this topic and has made efforts to account for increased collaboration between staff when allocating related service provider FTEs. In addition, specific training has been provided to enhance specially designed instruction and to promote co-implementation in specific areas of need. All HCPS speech language pathologists have been trained in the Lindamood Phoneme Sequencing Program (LiPS), which develops phonemic awareness by teaching students to recognize how their mouths are formed to make the sounds of language which provides kinesthetic feedback to enable reading, spelling, and speech. This is one example of training to promote co-implementation between speech language pathologists and special educators. Additional exploration of similar programs is needed in the coming years to promote a shift in culture to ensure that all IEP team members take shared ownership for the co-evaluation, co-development, and co-implementation of IEP's.

The HCPS SE Leadership Team consists of Special Education Coordinators, Teacher Specialists, Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBAs) and Behavior Coaches who work directly with SE teachers and other school-based staff to deliver traditional and job-embedded professional development. While staffing increases are not supported in the proposed 24-25 budget, the Office of Special Education maintains the following goals with regards to shifts in staffing to support the delivery of high quality specially designed instruction in the coming years: establish a formula to determine the appropriate number of SE Teacher Specialists to effectively support programming needs and increase SE Teacher Specialist staff accordingly; reclassify SE Teacher Specialists to 11-month positions; increase the number of BCBAs and/or Behavior Coaches with a target of at least 1 BCBA or Behavior Coach per building; increase the number of BCBAs to support the regional STRIVE and CSP programs with a target of increasing from 2 to 6 BCBAs in the next 5 years; increase the number of SE Evaluators to allow increased support to new and veteran SE Teachers with maintaining compliance with paperwork/case management with a target of 4 additional SE Evaluators over the next 5 years; add a SE Teacher Specialist with a focus on reading intervention K-12; and add a SE Teacher Specialist with a focus on supporting paraeducators.



XIX. Disproportionate Identification & Disciplinary Practices

NEW Discuss the LEA's plan to improve education for students with disabilities through accurate screening and disciplinary practices. Provide an analysis of current data related to both the under- and over-identification of students with disabilities and disproportionality of student discipline during the pre-referral process or once identified as a student with a disability. Identify affected student groups and areas of disproportionality, the root causes for the disproportionality(ies), and the specific strategies the LEA uses or intends to use to mitigate and eliminate such occurrences at individual schools and across its system of schools.

Required Data Analysis: Through an analysis of data, discuss progress towards meeting the Blueprint Outcome to mitigate disproportionate identification and disciplinary practices.

Criteria for Success

- Provides an analysis of data disaggregated by student groups to identify disproportionalities in identification and disciplinary practices and determine their root causes and identifies systemic changes that address the root causes.
- Provides a plan for professional learning and support for general education teachers to build knowledge and skills in order to provide high-quality instruction and interventions that are differentiated to meet the needs of individual students.
- Includes a detailed description of the pre-referral process and its relationship to the LEA's system of multi-Tiered supports for students.

HCPS is committed to the success of our students with disabilities.

Current trend data indicates that HCPS has experienced a steady increase in the number of students who are eligible for special education over the course of the past 5 years, Currently, HCPS exceeds the State average of 12.4% students with disabilities.

Year	SWD %	COUNT	TOTAL
		All Students	
2023	14.0	5337	38,108
2022	13.3	5048	37,849
2021	12.9	4764	37,012
2020	12.3	4727	38,531
2019	12.1	4598	37,873

Disproportionality: Current areas of disproportionality include the overrepresentation of Asian students in highly restrictive environments and the discipline of African American students with suspensions. Two other areas in HCPS data show disproportionality, but do not meet the cell size (5) or the N size (20).

Reference: [MSDE Data File Tab 19a-c](#)

The next graph includes data that was provided to HCPS in preparation for the drafting of this Blueprint report. **Reference:** [MSDE Data File Tab 19a-c](#). Identified in the chart below is a disproportionate risk ratio for African American students identified as Intellectually disabled (ID). For several years, HCPS has employed strategies to address the disproportionate identification of African American students identified as intellectually disabled (ID, 2015-2016 risk ratio 2.71). Efforts such as developing best practices, conducting training on culturally responsive practices and assessment, and use of eligibility checklists by IEP teams have yielded positive results as HCPS projections of the Risk Ratio for African American students identified as ID is now 1.88 for 2023.

Indicator		2020	2021	2022	2023
Asian	Placement<40%				3.12 current
Black	Intellectual Disability	2.15	2.07	2.07	1.88 current
Black	OSS < 10 days	2.04	1.01	2.09	2.32 current
Black	OSS > 10 days	3.84	---	3.68	2.81 current
Black	ISS < 10 days	3.50	---	---	---
Black	ISS > 10 days	---	---	---	---
Black	Sum Disciplinary Total	2.26	0.93	2.22	2.34 current
Hispanic	OSS < 10 days	0.73	2.61	1.08	.84 current
Hispanic	Sum Disciplinary Total	0.83	2.42	0.99	.84 current

Addressing disproportionate suspension of African American students with disabilities remains a priority. HCPS monitors and evaluates disciplinary practices using a variety of sources. Each school has access to a Disproportionality Dashboard which is generated from the HCPS ESchool Data Management System. The dashboard provides building administrators with the ability to monitor risk ratios for all subgroups at the building level. A district level dashboard is also utilized by HCPS leadership to monitor disproportionate disciplinary practices county-wide. The Disproportionality Dashboard has been instrumental in allowing schools to focus on the work needed to address disproportionate disciplinary practices. The school system also conducts Equity Walk-Throughs and provides schools with a variety of equity tools to promote positive interventions and supports throughout the county.

Professional Development: Using Comprehensive Coordinated Early Intervening Services (CCEIS) funds, HCPS has been able to train 30 internal staff as trainers under the International Institute for Restorative Practices (IIRP) for Educator methods to foster positive classroom and school culture. These trainers have been able to train 316 other HCPS staff in this restorative approach. Further training is scheduled for Spring of 2024. Staff taking this course report a high level of satisfaction with the learning with a score of 4.83 of 5 felt the professional opportunity was beneficial (181 respondents). In a follow up survey completed by 105 participants 104 reported they have or were likely to implement what they had learned, 89 reported they have or are likely to recommend using what they learned, and 103 responded yes or maybe to recommending this professional development to colleagues.

In addition, HCPS used CCEIS funds to have principals, assistant principals, social workers, school psychologists, school safety liaisons, counselors, and some teaching staff (120 trained) in Restorative Justice Conferencing professional development through IIRP to allow them to implement these methods in our schools with the highest suspension rates.

Preschool and regular CCEIS funds have been and continue to support the training of both general and special education preschool and kindergarten teachers in the Pyramid Model for Supporting Social Emotional Competence in Infants and Young Children. To date 410 teachers and supporting staff members have been trained in the Pyramid Model in HCPS. Alternate funds have been used to train 30 Infants and Toddlers staff in these same methods.

The Office of Organization Development (OOD) in collaboration with Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment have begun a systemic professional development initiative to improve instruction through the use of evidence informed practices utilizing Sherrington and Caveglioli's *Walthru 5-Step Guides*. OOD introduced these resources to principals and other system leaders in January with some schools beginning to pilot the resources in December. The use of these evidence-based resources will give HCPS a common language and clear and concise steps supported by research as to how to improve instruction.

NEW Next steps will be to link these resources to Danielson and to help administrators feel comfortable leading their teams in implementing these at their schools. Implementation will allow HCPS to support new hires, reaffirm and develop expertise with existing educators, increase the effectiveness of instructional leadership, and simplify strategy instruction and support School Performance goals.

Our nontenured teachers are provided continuous job-embedded support through an Instructional Coach and other Teacher Specialist roles. This support occurs through demonstration lessons, co-teaching, co-planning, data collection, reflective conversations, visits to master teachers' classrooms, and other identified best practices. They approach this work from a Coaching standpoint, employing cognitive coaching strategies, by thinking aloud, through providing multiple models and choice, and by encouraging teachers to identify their goals.

All HCPS teachers PK-12 participate in systemwide professional learning offered by the content offices. These sessions provide updates on curriculum and standards and models of evidence-informed instructional strategies. Teachers learn strategies for differentiating instruction (one focus this year has been on the implementation of targeted small groups) and for collecting and responding to formative assessment data. Opportunities are provided to individuals responsible for implementing research-based interventions across all levels. Content supervisors, specialists, and teacher leaders provide required and choice sessions that encompass the skills needed to be a highly effective practitioner.

Student Services Teams: A robust and effective process for implementing and evaluating a student's response to intervention is essential to mitigating opportunities for over- and under- identification for Special Education. Each HCPS school has the responsibility for ensuring the delivery of a multi-tiered system of supports to proactively meet the needs of all students. Student Services Teams and building administrators ensure the delivery of evidence-based practices and interventions matched to each student's identified needs. The HCPS Student Service Team (SST) is a multidisciplinary school-based group that meets regularly, (generally one to two times per month) to collaborate and aid identified students who are having difficulties at school or need access to an accelerated curriculum. The SST uses a problem-solving approach to identify, implement, and evaluate strategies and/or interventions designed to address the needs of individual students. HCPS uses a uniform SST process that includes consistent guidelines and forms in use county-wide. [Reference: SST Sample](#)

When the SST convenes, input from the parent and the referring teacher is considered in conjunction with a wide range of data from a variety of sources (academic, behavioral, attendance, etc.). The SST analyzes all possible factors impacting the student's academic and functional performance including gaps in instruction resulting from frequent school changes, high absenteeism, acquisition of the English language, and/or other variables such as physical or medical conditions, sensory needs (hearing/vision) and trauma that may be contributing to the student's poor performance on academic tasks and/or their behavior. Based on data collected and analyzed, the SST determines appropriate next steps. In some instances, this entails the development of a Student Intervention Plan that addresses the identified academic, behavioral, and/or social target area(s); details interventions, strategies, and individuals responsible for strategy implementation; and states expected outcomes in observable, measurable terms, including timelines for implementation. Once identified interventions, strategies, and proposals have been implemented for a reasonable and specified period (minimum of 6-8 weeks), the SST re-convenes to review and evaluate progress. The Student Intervention Plan is modified as needed. Through the SST process, if the student's response to the proposed intervention results in suspicion that the student may be impacted by an educational disability, a referral to Special Education or the 504 Team is made.

Since the development of the Blueprint in March 2023, HCPS has not made significant gains in the strategies related to improving the SST process. Plans are in development for a deep dive into the SST process during the 24-25 school year. In this deep dive, HCPS intends to evaluate current practices, and make refinements based on the results of that evaluation. Development and implementation of an electronic SST data management system remains a priority for HCPS. All documentation related to the SST process is housed at the building level. HCPS needs a data management system that will allow for the desegregation of data across individual demographic groups. An electronic data management system will also promote continuity in the SST process across schools, improve progress monitoring of individual Student Intervention Plans and will allow for enhanced evaluation of the SST process county-wide to guide accountability efforts. HCPS attempted to address this need through application to the ROSE grant.

Unfortunately, HCPS was not selected as a recipient of the grant and will need to revisit an electronic SST data management system in the coming school year.

NEW With the development of the new Multi-Tiered System of Supports for Student Success Dashboard, school-based leadership have access to detailed information about the full continuum of interventions that have been approved by the HCPS General Curriculum Committee (GCC). Coordination between the departments of Student Support Services, CIA, and OOD is needed to analyze the use of interventions across the system and to provide necessary training, job-embedded coaching, and evaluation.

Pre-K: With the increase in full-day Pre-K programs, HCPS has identified strategies to support the implementation of a MTSS for preschool-aged students, including those attending private Pre-K programs. At this time, preschool-aged students enrolled in an HCPS school are supported through the SST process. HCPS is working to develop Tier 1 and Tier 2 supports for preschool-aged students who attend community preschool centers and who are serviced on an Extended IFSP. This year, HCPS has expanded various Tier 1 and Tier 2 supports for preschool aged children to include Preschoolers Learning to Use Social Skills (PLUSS), Infants and Toddlers Play Groups, and consultation with community preschool providers by the SE Community Support Team. Professional development was provided to build the capacity in the implementation of intervention and developmentally appropriate practices for preschool aged students attending HCPS schools. Development of a tracking system to identify children who have not been successful (soft expulsion) in community preschools with follow-up to families to ensure that these children have access to an educational environment that is well suited to the individual needs of the child continues to be an area of need to be addressed in the coming year.

XX. Effective Community Partnerships

NEW How does the LEA support students attending community schools where there is a higher concentration of poverty by supporting their community schools through a collective impact approach? Describe how the LEA ensures its schools align partnerships to their needs assessments and collaborate with partners to share leadership, establish goals, and increase accountability for achieving intended outcomes in service of a specific community and its students.

Criteria for Success

- Describes how collective impact (that leverages shared leadership and accountability across multiple organizations) is being utilized to identify community needs.
- Discusses a process for developing partnerships aligned to the needs assessment(s) of individual community schools.
- Describes how it collaborates with partners to establish goals, coordinates services and support, and monitors achievement of intended outcomes.

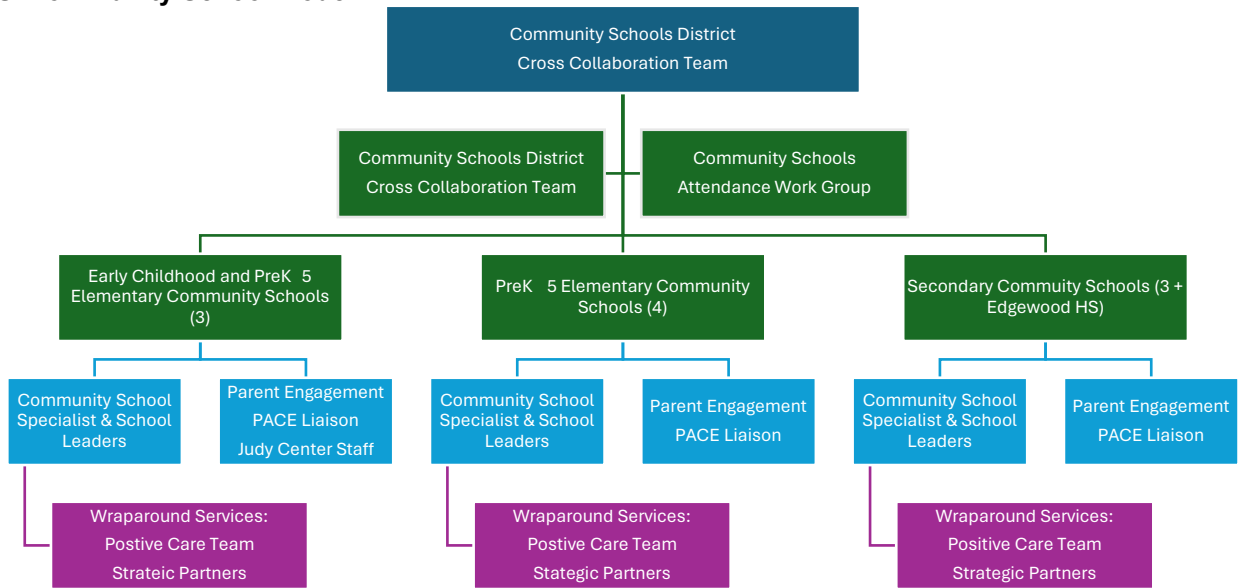
HCPS is committed to the Community Schools model.

HCPS supports students attending community schools in a multitude of ways. In a district-wide, diverse stakeholder process, HCPS has completed visioning work with the support of consultants through the Maryland Leads grant, resulting in the following shared vision and branding.

Vision Statement: Harford County Community Schools aspire to be vibrant hubs of learning and empowerment; where families, communities, and partners unite to create a place of equity, belonging, and excellence; equipping students for fulfilling futures and nurturing strong and resilient communities.

Tagline: Harford County Community Schools: Empowering Dreams, Building Futures, Uniting Communities.

HCPS' Community School Model:

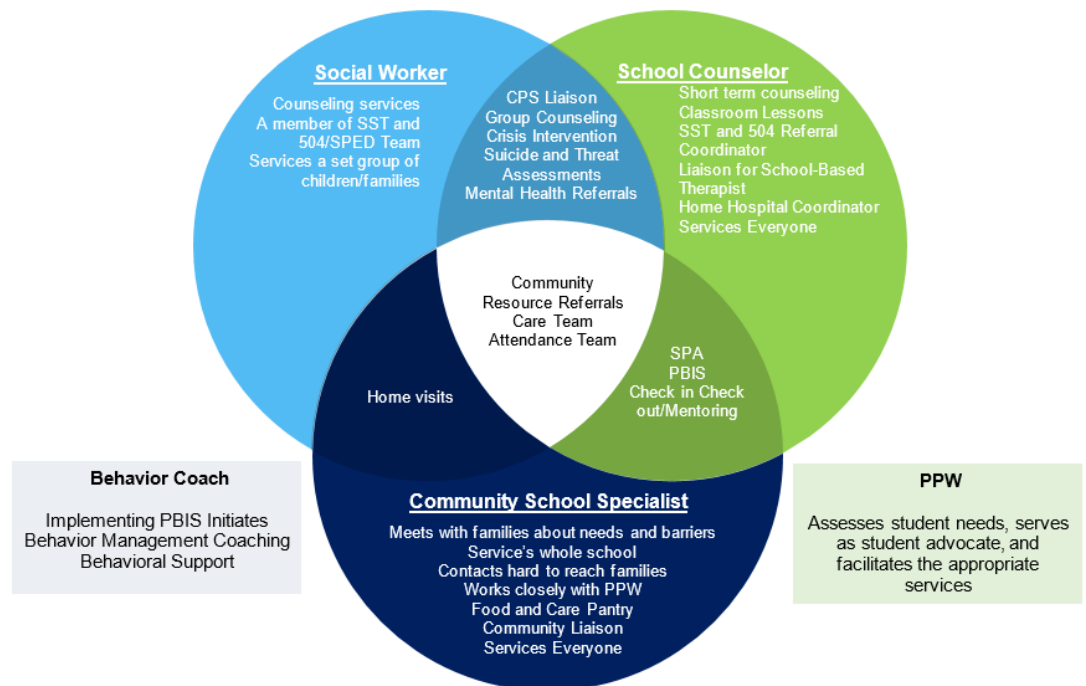


Community Schools District Cross Collaboration Team: Comprised of district leaders from the District Grant Specialist, Office of Strategic Initiatives, Title I, Community Partnerships, and Student Support Services. The team focuses on sharing resources and shared oversight in the absence of a DCSS.

Community Schools Attendance Work Group: Comprised of Community School Specialist, PPWs, and Student Support Services. Using components of Attendance Matters framework, this group is focused on analyzing chronic absenteeism trends to determine ways to decrease attendance barriers.

Positive Care Teams: School-based teams can vary depending on the positions at the school, but the team can comprise of a Community School Specialist, PPW, social worker, school psychologist and other support staff and lead by Community School Specialist to ensure students receive whole child supports, avoiding duplication of services, and maximizing partner resources.

Sample Positive Care Team model employed at Community Schools if the needs assessment provides for the listed staff.



PACE Liaisons: Using the Dr. Steven Constantino's Engage Every Family: Five Simple Principles; Culture That Engages Every Family, Communicate Effectively and Develop Relationships, Build Family Efficacy, Engage Every Family in Decision-Making, and Engage the Greater Community and the Parent Academy model; the HCPS has been working towards increased Family Focused events. Sessions have included new school/new family CS orientation, family/parent leadership academies, restorative practices for school and home, family-friendly academic supports, wholistic social emotional wellness seminars, job and financial fitness resources, and grassroots community engagement. These collaborative efforts help promote school and community empowerment and incite social justice.

Partner Community School Collaborative (PCSC) & Community Schools Blueprint Subcommittee: The Partner Community Schools Collaborative is a county/district-wide Collective Impact Steering Committee work group comprised of stakeholders who work to ensure fair and equitable resources are accessible to students, families, and other community members in the communities where HCPS CS are located and create ongoing opportunities for students, families, and community members to inform school decision making. Community Schools Blueprint Subcommittee is comprised of many of the same partners as the PCSC, but most of the sessions focus on information sharing and at times working on problems on practice **Reference:** [Partner Community Schools Collaborative Survey 23-24](#)

Strategic Partners: CS partnerships are tiered to indicate the level of commitment and engagement the partners have and help describe the true definition of a partner at a CS and gaps in partnership.

Collective Impact Approach: HCPS supports students in CSs through a tailored collective impact approach that prioritizes relationship building, a common agenda, data sharing, continuous communication, and backbone support. This modified framework, inspired by successful models like "We Go Together," in West Chicago Community Schools, ensures that partnerships align with school needs assessments and work collaboratively toward shared goals with increased accountability.

Backbone Support: HCPS serves as the backbone support for collective impact efforts, leading the coordination between the community and partners. To enhance collaboration and stakeholder buy-in, the Partner Community School Collaborative (PCSC) was established. Comprising community partners, school staff, central office, and families, this group advocates for community empowerment and engagement, meeting bi-monthly to review data, identify gaps, and advocate for CS initiatives within the larger community.

Common Agenda: The PCSC operates with a common agenda focused on thought partnership, understanding of the work, information sharing, and collaboration to address needs and increase resources in HCPS CSs. Meetings follow a structured format covering introduction, partner acknowledgment, data sharing, action items, and closure, fostering a cycle of information exchange and accountability as referenced in

Data Sharing: Regular data sharing and discussions at PCSC meetings inform needs assessments and priority setting. Quantitative and qualitative data help identify key areas such as academic achievement, school culture, parent engagement, and community collaboration. This data-driven approach enables the development of implementation plans within a Results-Based Accountability (RBA) framework, ensuring partners can fill gaps and track progress effectively. **References:** [Partner Community Schools Collaborative Survey 23-24](#); [Community Survey & Needs Assessment 23-24](#); [Needs Assessment Presentation 2.24](#); [Southern Harford County CS Advisory Board Sample](#)

Additionally, part of the work at the PCSC meetings is goal setting and achievement monitoring. Community Schools Specialists (CSS) share out successes in the work that aligns directly to a partner/partnership or as a result of ongoing partnerships.

Relationship Building: Feedback from partners underscores the importance of reciprocal relationships. Activities aimed at relationship building, informed by partner feedback, foster a sense of community and

collaboration among stakeholders. By bringing partners together as a unified group, HCPS promotes dialogue and relationship building that transcends individual school silos. [Reference: Community Schools Partner Organizations](#)



The process for developing partnerships and relationships aligned with the needs assessments of individual community schools involves the following key steps and mechanisms to ensure effective collaboration and support:

- *PCSC Bi-Monthly Meetings:* These meetings serve as a central platform for coordinating partnership efforts. Within these gatherings, partner alignment is a primary focus. This alignment takes on various forms, but primarily partners have the opportunity to sign up for specific initiatives or projects that align with their expertise and interests during these sessions.
- *Proactive Partner Outreach:* Partners seek out schools based on identified needs or proximity to their organization. This proactive approach ensures that partnerships are strategically formed to address specific community needs.
- *Community Canvassing:* Engaging in canvassing efforts helps identify potential partners and resources within the local area, enhancing the network of support available to community schools.
- *Networking Facilitation:* Partners connect other potential partners with either the PCSC meetings or the school directly. This allows partners to feel part of the cross connection and collaboration.
- *Grandfathered Partnerships:* Existing partnerships that were established prior to the designation of community schools are recognized and integrated into the partnership framework, ensuring continuity, and leveraging existing resources.
- *District Office of Family and Community Partnerships:* Serving as an intermediary, this office plays a crucial role in connecting established partners with schools that align with their expertise or focus areas. By leveraging their knowledge of both partner capabilities and school needs, they facilitate meaningful connections that maximize impact. Focus areas may include mental health support, after-school programs, food access initiatives, and more.

To foster and sustain these relationships, CSS works closely with both schools and partners to facilitate communication, address challenges, and ensure that partnerships remain aligned with evolving needs. Specific organizations are spotlighted at PCSC meetings and seasonal events. This spotlighting not only acknowledges their efforts, but also encourages ongoing engagement and collaboration. School Level recognition include: Certificate of Appreciation, Plaque or Trophy, Press Release or Newsletter Feature, Public Acknowledgment at Events, Special Events or Appreciation Luncheons, Invitation to School Events. By acknowledging their contributions in meaningful ways, schools can strengthen relationships, inspire continued support, and cultivate a culture of gratitude and collaboration.

Continuous Communication: Partner feedback highlights the need for ongoing communication and centralized information access. HCPS responded by developing a website and Facebook page to facilitate communication among partners, families, and the broader community, ensuring timely access to information and events.

Through this multifaceted approach, HCPS ensures that partnerships align with school needs assessments and collaborate effectively to address the unique needs of specific communities and their students. By fostering collaboration, sharing leadership, and increasing accountability, HCPS strives to achieve meaningful outcomes for all students attending community schools. [Reference: Community Schools Partner Organizations; Community Survey & Needs Assessment 23-24](#)

XXI. Expanding Behavioral Health Support

NEW Discuss how the LEA will enhance and expand behavioral health support for students, including how it leverages the Consortium on Coordinated Community Supports to provide services to students and communities.

Required Data Analysis: Through an analysis of data, discuss progress towards meeting the Blueprint outcome to enhance and expand behavioral health support for students.

Criteria for Success

- Provides an analysis of data to identify trends and needs related to students' behavioral health.
- Describes how the LEA uses data to identify opportunities to enhance and expand behavioral health support for students.
- Provides specific examples of how the LEA incorporates the work of the Consortium on Coordinated Community Supports in its behavioral health programming.

HCPS has a robust network of behavioral health support for our students.

Over the past year, HCPS has expanded and enhanced access to behavioral health support for students and families, including participation in the Maryland Consortium on Coordinated Supports process.

In the previous Blueprint plan, one barrier experienced by families is treatment services availability. Additionally, the task of securing services is often felt to be an arduous process and families often give up before securing needed services. HCPS has taken specific steps to address these issues. First, HCPS has actualized a partnership with Care Solace, a third-party care coordination company that finds behavioral health resources for families. In solidifying this relationship, **all HCPS students, staff members, and their families have access to services provided by Care Solace.** Individuals can be referred via warm handoffs by an HCPS verified staff member, or they can self-refer. A care manager will then work on behalf of the client to find, in most cases, multiple potential service providers. ***NEW*** Since July there have been over 1,000 referrals, and more than 500 appointments have been scheduled. Data received from Care Solace estimates they have saved Harford County users more than 1300 hours of time that would have been spent making phone calls on their own. This partnership was made possible through a generous grant from the Harford County Health Department. We are excited to share that funding has been secured to continue this relationship for the 2024-25 school year.

For many years HCPS has coordinated a robust school-based mental health program. This program pairs schools with at least one outpatient mental health clinic. After securing parent permission, school-based Student Support Services staff members complete a referral for services. Families complete the intake process and once complete, services are delivered to students by the outpatient therapist in the school, which will then be delivered by the outpatient clinician in the school. Students and families who encounter extreme barriers accessing such services outside of the school day are prioritized. This school year HCPS increased its partnerships by adding three new providers, bringing the total to 14. Last school year over 1000 students and families utilized this program to gain access to mental health treatment. So far this school year approximately 600 students are accessing mental health services via these partnerships.

During the summer of 2021 HCPS formalized a process completed by many school-based Student Support Services staff members across the district. We produced our own Wellness Needs Assessment (WNA) administered to elementary and secondary students in the early fall. The WNA includes questions related to both physical and mental wellness. The 2022-23 WNA revealed that students have trouble managing time and school responsibilities and that they identify mental health as a priority. Middle school students revealed that they struggle with regulating emotions and maintaining focus in school. Results from the 2023-24 WNA revealed similar results. For example, 75% of students agree that they can identify emotions but only about half felt they could explain their feelings to others. Similarly, only 54% of respondents said they could calm themselves when feeling stressed. These findings indicate that self-regulation continues to be an area of need. School-based student services staff members utilize results of the WNA to plan Tier 1 interventions as well as targeted individual and small group interventions.

References: [Wellness Needs Assessment Summary - 23-24](#); [Wellness Needs Assessment Report 23-24](#)

At the district level, data from the WNA was considered when approaching our work with the Maryland Consortium. Organizations seeking letters of support were directed to the HCPS strategic plan for implementing Blueprint before submitting proposals. A short form was created which all interested parties were required to submit which included a description of services and plans for implementation. Proposals were reviewed by HCPS staff members and community behavioral health partners. Fifteen letters of support were issued by HCPS and the Consortium awarded funds to seven organizations. Of the seven organizations, two have existing relationships via MOU with the district. Services and supports to be provided by the various organizations include, but are not limited to assistance with transportation and co-pays, expansion of programs to include services to privately insured and uninsured families, applied behavioral analysis and registered behavior technician services, intensive outpatient services for youth returning from inpatient hospitalizations, behavioral health training for school-based staff, instruction mindfulness practices, and funding for county-wide mental health awareness initiatives.

At present, the district is working with the seven organizations to create, or in some cases, modify Memorandums of Understanding. Also, we are awaiting the final vote by the Consortium to name the Hub agency for Harford County. Note that the Local Behavior Authority in Harford County submitted a proposal for Hub status supported by HCPS. HCPS will continue its work to fully operationalize proposed services funded by Consortium grants and provide resources and referrals to meet the behavioral health needs of students and families. ***NEW*** Our planned partners and services are:

- **FreshStart Therapeutic Services:** This program will provide therapeutic mentoring and peer and family/community group support on topics such as depression, anxiety, coping skills, social skills, independent living skills, suicide and substance use prevention. Programming will include Unified Protocols for Transdiagnostic Treatment of Emotional Disorders in Children and Adolescents (UP-C/UP-A), Botvin Life Skills, Youth Aware of Mental Health (YAM). The grantee proposes to serve a total of 105 students/families from eight elementary, middle, and high schools.
- **Thrive Behavioral Health:** This program will provide substance abuse prevention and early childhood intervention services; parent support groups; school professional development; translation services; and wraparound services. Programming will include Unified Protocols for Transdiagnostic Treatment of Emotional Disorders in Children and Adolescents (UPC/UP-A). The grantee proposes to serve a total of 2,480 students/families from 10 elementary, middle, and high schools.
- **Achieving True Self:** This program will provide social-emotional learning through social skills groups, parent training, behavior consultation and support. Programming will include The Chicago Parenting Program. The grantee proposes to serve a total of 223 students/families from 54 pre-k, elementary, middle, and high schools.
- **Nature Worx, Inc.:** This program will provide mindfulness-based nature immersion sessions for students and their families to help participants learn skills to support their mental/emotional health and increase their resiliency/coping abilities. Programming will include mental health first aid and nature therapy. The grantee proposes to serve a total of 550 students/families from one middle and one high school.
- **Harford County Boys & Girls Club:** This program will focus on providing social-emotional skill building and character development through after-school activities. It will also work to address social determinants of health (SDOH). Programming will include Positive Action. The grantee proposes to serve a total of 1,500 students/families from 23 schools, including elementary, middle, and high schools.
- **Cook Center for Human Connection:** This program will provide parent coaching, school staff training, and promote positive classroom environments. Programming will include Cognitive Behavioral Intervention for Trauma in Schools (CBITS). The grantee proposes to serve a total of 42,655 students/families from 55 schools, including pre-k, elementary, middle, and high schools.
- **Pivot Point Counseling, LLC:** This program will provide outpatient psychiatric services, care coordination, case management, family support groups, collaboration with other providers, and wraparound services. Programming will include Safety Planning Intervention and Motivational Interviewing. The grantee proposes to serve a total of 60 students/families from 10 high schools.

Reference: [Consortium Grantees](#)

PILLAR 5

XXII. Stakeholder Engagement

Initial Blueprint Implementation Plan Reference: Questions 161

In March 2023, the LEA discussed how it would engage and represent the voices of stakeholders in the development and implementation of its Blueprint Implementation Plan, an essential element for the 2024 submission as well. Discuss the LEA's strategy or framework for successfully engaging multiple stakeholder groups for varied purposes during this process, including empowering stakeholders to provide meaningful input into developing and implementing its Blueprint Implementation Plan. Describe how the LEA determines success in this area, including lessons learned and adjustments needed. Provide specific examples of where stakeholder input has been incorporated into the plan and explain why stakeholder input was critical for each example. Considerations:

- Key stakeholders (teachers, school leaders, community members, LEA Executive Team including the superintendent)
- Vision building and goal setting
- Communicating to educate and inform about Blueprint implementation (e.g., the Career Ladder)
- Collaborating to create and refine plans
- Establishing feedback loops
- Data collection and analysis
- Engaging educators across subject areas (e.g., social studies, science, fine arts)
- Engaging underrepresented groups
- Successful strategies and opportunities for improvement
- Reporting and sharing progress
- Leveraging strategic facilitators and Blueprint coordinators

Criteria for Success

- Articulates a highly detailed outline of engagement that addresses multiple stakeholder groups with a well defined timeline that considers the diversity of demographics, interests, and experiences.
- Clearly demonstrates a thorough understanding of stakeholder assets (subject-matter expertise, skill sets, knowledge, insights, etc.) and how they can contribute to the plan's development and implementation.
- Identifies multiple ways the LEA is intentionally educating their community about the Blueprint's expected outcomes and goals (e.g. parents, students, teachers, support staff, facilities staff, business owners, local council members)
- Demonstrates use of protocols and/or facilitation strategies to engage a variety of groups and capture and incorporate feedback into the plan's development and implementation.
- Provides a detailed and insightful summary of feedback from each stakeholder group, demonstrating a deep understanding of their perspectives.

HCPS has multifaceted approaches for meaningful stakeholder engagement.

The first part of this plan, System-wide response, outlines expansive initiatives that require effective stakeholder engagement for successful implementation. To address this challenge, HCPS employs a multifaceted strategy involving committee structures, leadership forums, digital engagement, and comprehensive survey analysis. With more than 160 individuals contributing across various committees, including community members, there is a wealth of diverse perspectives driving effective communication at every level of the system. Furthermore, HCPS utilizes diverse forums, digital platforms, and regular surveys to ensure stakeholders are not only informed but actively engaged and empowered to contribute meaningfully to the Blueprint's implementation. **References:** [HCPS Blueprint Website](#); [January 2023](#)

[Comprehensive Board Presentation](#); [All-Staff Live Teams event March 2023](#); [Newsletter Archive](#); [Implementation Plan Survey Analysis](#); [HCPS State of the District](#)

HCPS's inclusive committee structure serves as a central component for communication, vetting, and problem-solving related to the Blueprint. Each pillar committee is co-chaired by representatives from HCPS and community leaders, ensuring a balanced perspective incorporating both educational expertise and community insight. These committees facilitate dialogue and collaboration among various stakeholders, including parents, teachers, business partners, and students, fostering engagement in decision-making processes. The following outlines collaboration and communication by stakeholder group. **Reference:** [HCPS Committee and Implementation Structure](#)

Group	Collaboration/ Representation	Communication Methods
Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers/Counselors are represented on the Steering Committee, Elevating Educators, North Star College & Career Readiness, and Student Supports. Elevating Educators committee co-chairs launched a focus group series in January 2024 to gain more widespread teacher collaboration and feedback regarding pillar 2. Career Ladder Negotiations currently underway. Additional feedback through yearly Implementation Plan Survey. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committee representation Weekly systemwide 411 Newsletter Hcps.org Yearly required LIVE Teams Event focusing on the Blueprint (3/36/24) Systemwide professional development options Seasonal Blueprint Newsletter Updates in the Superintendent "Monthly Minute"
School Leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School leaders are represented on the Steering Committee, Early Childhood, Elevating Educators, North Star College & Career Readiness, and Student Supports. All High School principals were interviewed by the AIB Strategic Facilitator for pillar 3. Additional feedback through yearly Implementation Plan Survey; 23-24 Leadership Survey on Blueprint Return on Investment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committee representation Weekly Superintendent's Bulletin Administrative & Instructional Monthly in-person meetings with updates by the Superintendent Weekly systemwide 411 Newsletter Hcps.org Yearly required LIVE Teams Event focusing on the Blueprint (3/36/24) Systemwide professional development options Seasonal Blueprint Newsletter Updates in the Superintendent "Monthly Minute"
District Subject matter experts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subject matter experts are represented on the Steering Committee, Early Childhood, Elevating Educators, North Star College & Career Readiness, and Student Supports. Experts also lead workgroups, sub-committees, focus groups, and lead Blueprint Plan writing. Subject-matter experts lead workgroups, sub-committees, focus groups, and lead Blueprint Plan writing. All pillar 3 subject matter experts were interviewed by the AIB Strategic Facilitator for pillar 3. Instructional Coaches and Teacher Specialists are in a work group series for Spring 2024 to envision Additional feedback through yearly Implementation Plan Survey; 23-24 Leadership Survey on Blueprint Return on Investment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committee representation Weekly Superintendent's Bulletin Administrative & Instructional Monthly in-person meetings with updates by the Superintendent Weekly systemwide 411 Newsletter Hcps.org Yearly required LIVE Teams Event focusing on the Blueprint (3/36/24) Systemwide professional development options Seasonal Blueprint Newsletter Updates in the Superintendent "Monthly Minute" One: One Meetings with Blueprint Coordinator and work groups.

Group	Collaboration/ Representation	Communication Methods
District Leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District Leaders are represented on the Steering Committee, Early Childhood, Elevating Educators, North Star College & Career Readiness, and Student Supports. • District leaders also lead workgroups, sub-committees, focus groups, and lead Blueprint Plan writing. • All pillar 3 district leaders were interviewed by the AIB Strategic Facilitator for pillar 3. • Additional feedback through yearly Implementation Plan Survey; 23-24 Leadership Survey on Blueprint Return on Investment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee representation • Updates at weekly senior leadership meetings, biweekly Instructional Leadership meetings, weekly Administrative Leadership Meetings • Weekly Superintendent's Bulletin <p>Monthly in-person meetings with updates by the Superintendent</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekly systemwide 411 Newsletter • Hcps.org • Yearly required LIVE Teams Event focusing on the Blueprint (3/36/24) • Systemwide professional development options • Seasonal Blueprint Newsletter • Updates in the Superintendent "Monthly Minute" • One: One Meetings with Blueprint Coordinator and work groups.
Employee Bargaining Units		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee representation • Weekly systemwide 411 Newsletter • Hcps.org • Seasonal Blueprint Newsletter
Community & Business Partners		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee representation • Hcps.org • Seasonal Blueprint Newsletter • Social media posts and system wide mass communication by topic (dual enrollment, kindergarten registration, student support initiatives, etc.)
Parents		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee representation • Hcps.org • Social media posts and system wide mass communication by topic (dual enrollment, kindergarten registration, student support initiatives, etc.)

Group	Collaboration/ Representation	Communication Methods
Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A student is represented on the Steering Committee, Early Childhood, Elevating Educators, North Star College & Career Readiness, and Student Supports. • The Student Board member was interviewed by the AIB Strategic Facilitator for pillar 3. • Additional feedback through yearly Implementation Plan Survey. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee representation • Hcps.org • Social media posts and system wide mass communication by topic (dual enrollment, kindergarten registration, student support initiatives, etc.)
Boards of Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board members are represented on the Steering Committee, Elevating Educators, North Star College & Career Readiness, and Student Supports. • Small group board meetings are conducted prior to Board presentations for collaboration. • Additional feedback through yearly Implementation Plan Survey. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee representation • Weekly Board Update Bulletin • Board of Education Presentations • Weekly systemwide 411 Newsletter • Hcps.org • Yearly LIVE Teams Event focusing on the Blueprint (3/36/24) • Seasonal Blueprint Newsletter • Updates in the Superintendent "Monthly Minute" • One: One Meetings with Blueprint Coordinator
County Government & other Agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Chamber of Commerce, the Health Department, and Parks & Rec are the county agencies that have agreed to participate and are represented on Early Childhood, North Star College & Career Readiness, and Student Supports. • Additional feedback through yearly Implementation Plan Survey. • Pre-K Specific Collaboration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee representation • Weekly Board Update Bulletin • Board of Education Presentations • Hcps.org • Seasonal Blueprint Newsletter • One: One Meetings with Blueprint Coordinator

Comprehensive timeline of engagement: The linked comprehensive resource outlines the 2023-2024 stakeholder engagement activities surrounding the HCPS implementation of the Blueprint. Please take note there are a dozen work groups, leadership meetings, monthly superintendent updates, one on one meetings, and more that are not listed, but are equally vital to the transformative work taking place with diverse stakeholders at HCPS. [Reference: 2023-2024 Blueprint Implementation Timeline](#)

Key Roles:

- *Executive Leadership Team:* The Superintendent and Chief of Administration's leadership teams play a critical role in the implementation of the Blueprint for Maryland's further by shaping priorities, providing leadership and decision-making initiatives, problem-solving, and implementing Blueprint transformation.
- *Director of Strategic Initiatives:* Serving as the Blueprint Coordinator, supervisor of grants (including the MARYLAND Leads grant), and the Talent Pathways projects, creator of Advancing the Strategic Plan and the Annual Report, and long-term visioning and strategic planning, this role both generates the direction of Blueprint committees, works to create alignment and systemic understanding, spearheads specific initiatives that cross organizational boundaries, and liaise on several internal and external committees relating to Blueprint.
- *AIB Strategic Facilitator:* Strategic Facilitator at HCPS collaborates closely with the Director of Strategic Initiatives to oversee the evaluation and advancement of Blueprint Pillar 3 initiatives. This role initially involved conducting a comprehensive listening tour designed to gauge perceptions and challenges related to Pillar 3, with a focus on CCR eligibility and post-CCR pathways. The objectives of this tour included assessing the level of support provided to students at varying CCR eligibility

levels, examining existing support structures and instructional assistance, identifying opportunities for students to receive career counseling, and determining effective channels for stakeholder engagement. Through interviewing a comprehensive list of individuals, encompassing school and central office staff as well as external partners, the Strategic Facilitator gathered feedback both in-person and virtually. Data collected through live transcription were systematically analyzed to identify recurring themes and patterns, with key findings highlighted to address common challenges and enhance implementation strategies. [Reference: CCR Listening Tour Report Draft 04.24](#)

Challenges: As detailed in the first part of this plan, System-wide response, despite HCPS's efforts, challenges persist in achieving meaningful engagement, especially concerning topics that may not directly impact a stakeholder group. However, HCPS continues to seek innovative ways to capture the interest and involvement of diverse stakeholders, ensuring all voices are heard and considered. Each Blueprint committee has been tasked with bridging communication gaps within their respective pillars, exemplified by initiatives like the Elevating Educators Committee's focus on disseminating information directly from teachers to their peers. HCPS will continue to monitor progress and seek feedback through regular surveys, demonstrating a commitment to inclusivity, transparency, and effective communication. The following represents goals and efforts regarding stakeholder engagement.

Group	Goal	Focus
Teachers	Bring more teacher voice into the Blueprint Committees and Workgroups. The teacher's voice is currently underrepresented.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To ensure better access to committees and work groups, HCPS will need to explore either paying a negotiated hourly rate for after school or ensure release time for meetings during school. It has been a challenge to get regular commitment and participation in meetings from teachers and these measures will improve our outcomes. - The Elevating Educators Committee's is focusing on disseminating information directly from teachers to their peers.
School Leaders	Leverage high school and middle school leader feedback for long-term pillar 3 implementation.	Utilize the AIB Strategic Facilitator to gather feedback, provide objective and expert analyzation, and provide a decision road map
District Subject matter experts	Assess currently formed work groups to see which ones are high functioning, are phasing out, and are missing.	For the 2024-2025 School year the work groups for North Star College & Career Readiness and Elevating Educators will be evaluated and adjusted.
District Leaders	Leverage district leadership for long-term implementation, futures thinking, resource allocation, and problem-solving.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue to integrate Blueprint outcomes into the daily work of district leaders through the Advancing the Strategic Plan Superintendent's priorities and performance measures as described in part 1 of this plan, System-wide. - Utilize the AIB Strategic Facilitator to aid district leader decision-mapping for the future of pillar 3.
Employee Bargaining Units	Successfully negotiate a Career Ladder.	Ensure HCPS meets the requirements of the Blueprint legislation and envisions how unique-to-Harford County priorities could be embedded when resources allow.
Boards of Education	Leverage Board leadership for long-term resource allocation and district systemic goals and investments.	Ensure HCPS meets the requirements of the Blueprint legislation and envisions how unique-to-Harford County priorities could be embedded in the future when resources allow.

Group	Goal	Focus
Community & Business Partners	Continue to improve communication, outcomes, and logistics with key community partners: Harford County Community College, Susquehanna Workforce Network, Harford County Government, Harford County Health Department, private mental health providers, new consortium partners, and all private Pre-K provider.	These partners are critical to the successful implementation of the Blueprint, as such a variety of meetings, planning sessions, one on one meetings, and collaboration takes place. Working through differing language, bureaucratic processes, visions, and logistics can present challenges, but the HCPS approach is for true collaborative governance where we are equal partners in serving the needs of our community.
Parents	Ensure messages about specific initiatives reach families: Pre-K enrollment, student opportunities to explore teaching, post-CCR pathways, student support pathways, student mental health support, and resources for unique populations.	Gaining family and community attention on matters that do not directly impact their student is a challenge. HCPS has prioritized making sure the messages of change, new opportunities, goals, and specific initiatives reach our families.
Students	Ensure messages about specific initiatives reach students: student opportunities to explore teaching, post-CCR pathways, student support pathways, student mental health support, and resources for unique populations.	Intentional student engagement in Blueprint committees just begin in 23-24 and showed that students are interested in the future of education and student committee membership can expand. Also, rather than focus on branding all initiatives as Blueprint, HCPS has prioritized making sure the messages of change, new opportunities, goals, and specific initiatives reach our families.
County Government & other Agencies	Leverage county leadership for long-term resource allocation and county systemic goals and investments.	Ensure HCPS meets the requirements of the Blueprint legislation and envisions how unique-to-Harford County priorities could be embedded when resources allow.

Data Collection & Reporting: HCPS collects data through meeting evaluations, surveys, academic assessments, focus groups/needs assessments, interviews through the AIB Strategic Facilitator, and through goal targets in Advancing the Strategic Plan and the annual report:

- *Meeting evaluations:* All Blueprint meetings utilize a form to gather feedback.
- *Surveys:* Beginning with the initial implementation plan, HCPS conducted a system-wide survey and subsequent analysis detailed in part one of this plan, System-wide.
- *Focus groups/needs assessments:* Targeted studies provide data, feedback, and action items. Notable examples are:
 - [CCR Listening Tour Report Draft 04.24](#)
 - [Middle School Innovation Needs Diagnostic 2023 - Executive Summary & Summary Findings](#)
 - [Talent Pathways Needs Assessment Report;](#)
 - [Focus Group on Elementary Teacher Planning Time](#)
 - [Student Wellness Needs Assessment](#)
 - [Parent Engagement Survey Analysis](#)
 - [Measuring Reading Strategic Focus Group](#)
- *Goal targets in Advancing the Strategic Plan, Annual Report, and District Dashboards:* As detailed in part one of this plan, System-wide, please reference: [Advancing the Strategic Plan;](#) [HCPS Annual Report;](#) [HCPS State of the District](#)



Responsive to Stakeholder Feedback: In addition to examples provided throughout this plan reflective of stakeholder feedback concerning new initiatives or revised practice, key findings and recommendations from the [2023 Blueprint plan feedback](#) was also used to inform the 2024 Blueprint Plan. The key recommendations are as follows:

- Seek to communicate with high levels of transparency in all phases of implementation. To that end, it is recommended HCPS broadly and regularly disseminate Blueprint implementation plan details in layperson's language across a range of modes (e.g., websites, emails, news articles) to provide clarity around how HCPS is going to use resources to implement pillars with fidelity.
- Ensure there are specific goals or outcome measures in place which prioritize equity regarding the implementation of the plan.
- Considering the widespread endorsement of the goals and vision outlined in the Blueprint, despite varying levels of comprehension regarding implementation specifics, it is advisable for the district to persist in collaborating with the current stakeholder steering committee to gain insights and guide the process.
- Continue to engage stakeholders in discussions regarding the logistics of expanding Early Childhood Education (ECE) programs.

Overall, HCPS demonstrates a commitment to keeping a pulse on stakeholder feedback and adjusting practices accordingly through several key strategies: collaborative governance, targeted and multifaceted communication, continuous improvement, and consistent, persistent two-way communication.

XXIII. Blueprint Funding and Resources

NEW Blueprint Funding and Resources: Discuss the process the LEA uses to assess budgetary needs and make critical decisions about the allocation of new resources and the reallocation of existing resources to implement its Blueprint Implementation Plan. Include estimated funding allocations by pillar and program. Provide specific examples and the rationale for the allocation and reallocation of resources. Considerations:

- Budgeting annually and over multiple years
- Funds following students to their schools (Education Article § 5-234)
- Targeted funds (e.g., Transitional Supplemental Instruction Aid, Concentration of Poverty grants, State Aid Funding for CCR, etc.)
- **Required Data Analysis:** Through an analysis of data, discuss progress towards meeting the Blueprint outcome to ensure resources are aligned to meeting student needs at the school level.

Criteria for Success

- Clearly describes how new resources are being allocated and existing resources are being reallocated to address Blueprint priorities
- Provides a multi-year budgeting plan with estimated funding allocations by Blueprint pillar and program
- Identifies and describes strategies to increase the number of schools meeting the minimum school funding requirements

HCPS is committed to resource stewardship.

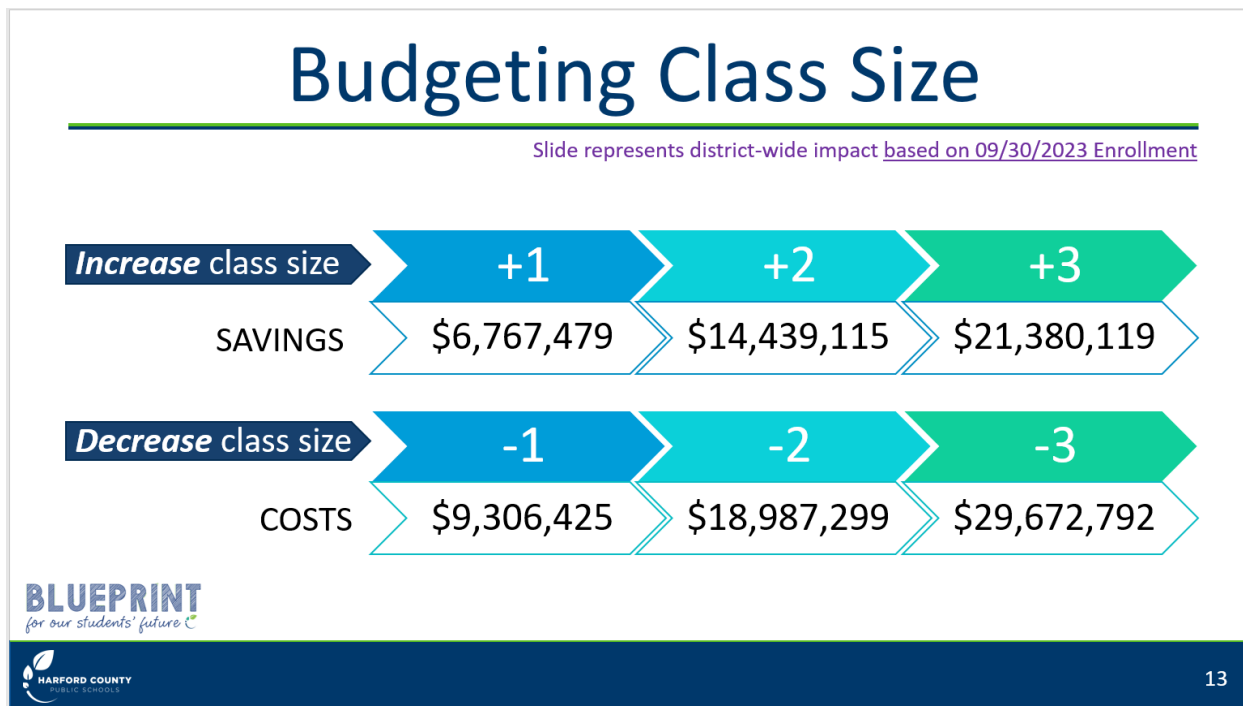
As detailed in part one of this plan, the System-wide response, HCPS is committed to responsible resource management. This commitment is apparent in several key areas. First, HCPS has invested in the Oracle Enterprise system to enhance financial tracking and decision-making capabilities. Second, HCPS has implemented targeted initiatives to address specific aspects of the Blueprint. Examples include leveraging partnerships with private mental health providers and the Harford County Health Department to provide mental and behavioral support for students; effective utilization of grants, such as the Maryland Leads grant, to kickstart various Blueprint initiatives, including Middle School innovation and NBCT support networks; and allocating district funding to the Talent Pathways project, aligning with the goals of the Blueprint's Pillar 2.

The [Fiscal Year 2025 Board of Education's \(BOE\) Proposed Budget for Harford County Public Schools](#) covers the period from July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025, and is presented as balanced for each of the district's funds, with projected revenues and expenditures outlined. The budget reflects input from various stakeholders, including community members, students, school leaders, employees, and association leaders, obtained through a budget survey and in-person input session. Despite a slight increase in enrollment compared to the prior year, certain student populations, such as Free and Reduced Meal, Special Education, and English Language Learners, have notably increased. The proposed fiscal year 2025 local request to support the unrestricted budget is \$354.9 million, with proposed increases primarily allocated for wage packages, health insurance, pension costs, transportation needs, and additional staff positions. The proposed budget aims to retain current staffing and services while accommodating new Special Education programs. The proposed budgets for Unrestricted Operating, Restricted, Food Service, and Capital budgets are \$660.9 million, \$45.1 million, \$22.0 million, and \$120.3 million, respectively. Emphasizing education as a top priority, the community acknowledges the significance of meaningful partnerships and emphasizes the importance of supporting both local initiatives and statewide mandates like the Blueprint. Despite challenges posed by the end of federal pandemic funds, the proposed budget is designed to enable HCPS to maintain student-facing positions and continue focusing on student achievement.

This implementation plan is submitted by May 1, 2024, but the HCPS funding picture is not finalized by the local government until as late as June 15, 2024, and the Harford County BOE approves a final budget by June 30, 2024. At the time of this submission, based on released statements by the Harford County Government, HCPS may have a 40 million dollar shortfall from the [BOE's Proposed Budget](#).

Reallocation Analysis: HCPS has conducted scenario-based analysis of funding reallocations to address budget shortfalls. For example:

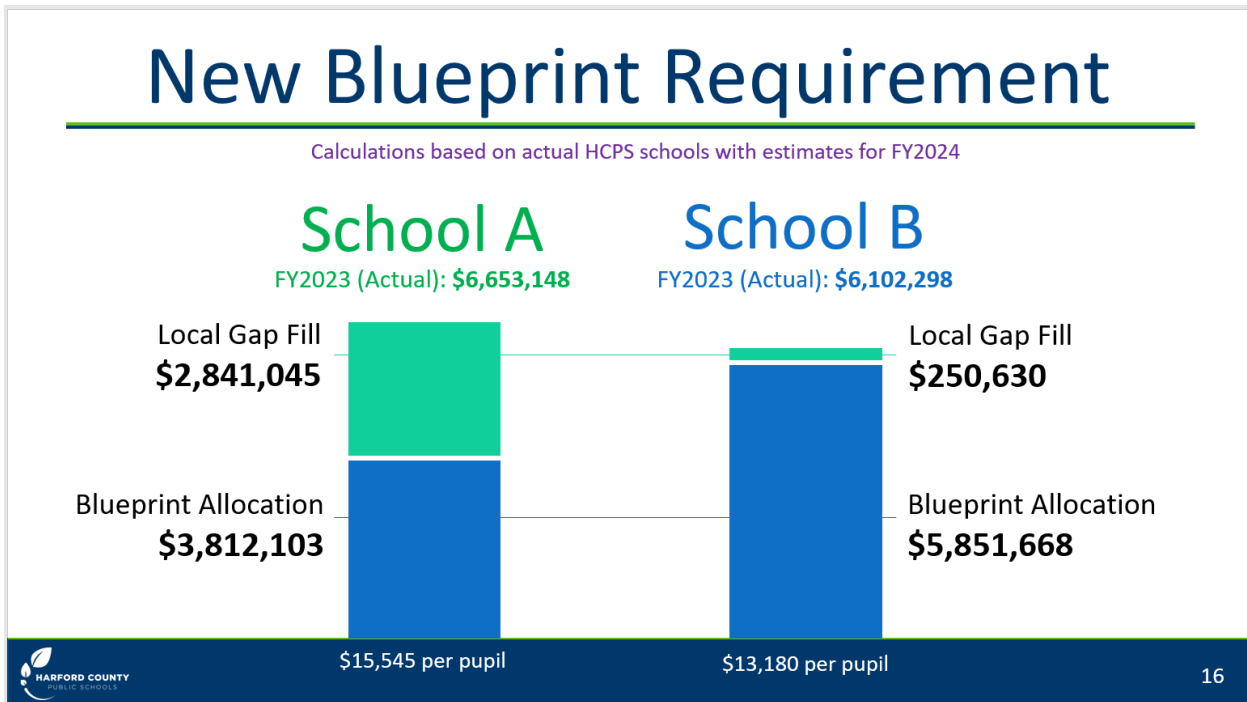
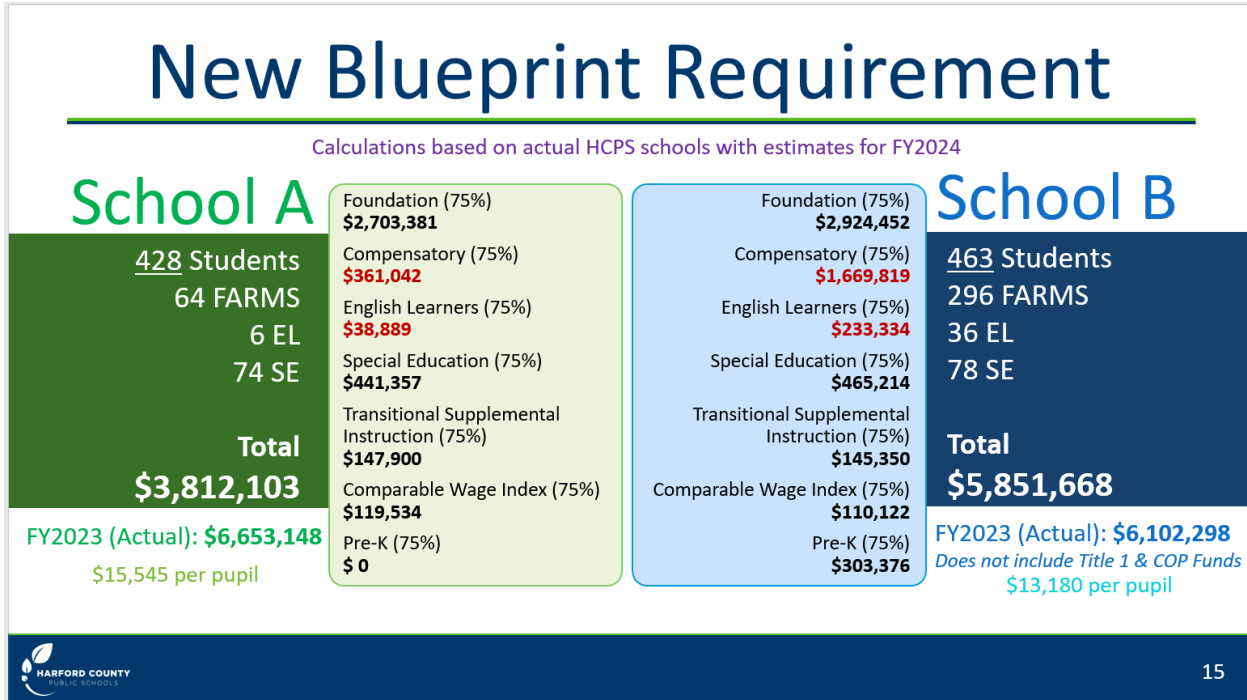
- The costs and/or savings related to changing teaching positions is \$913,290 for ten teachers.
- The costs and/or savings related to changing class size is reflected here:

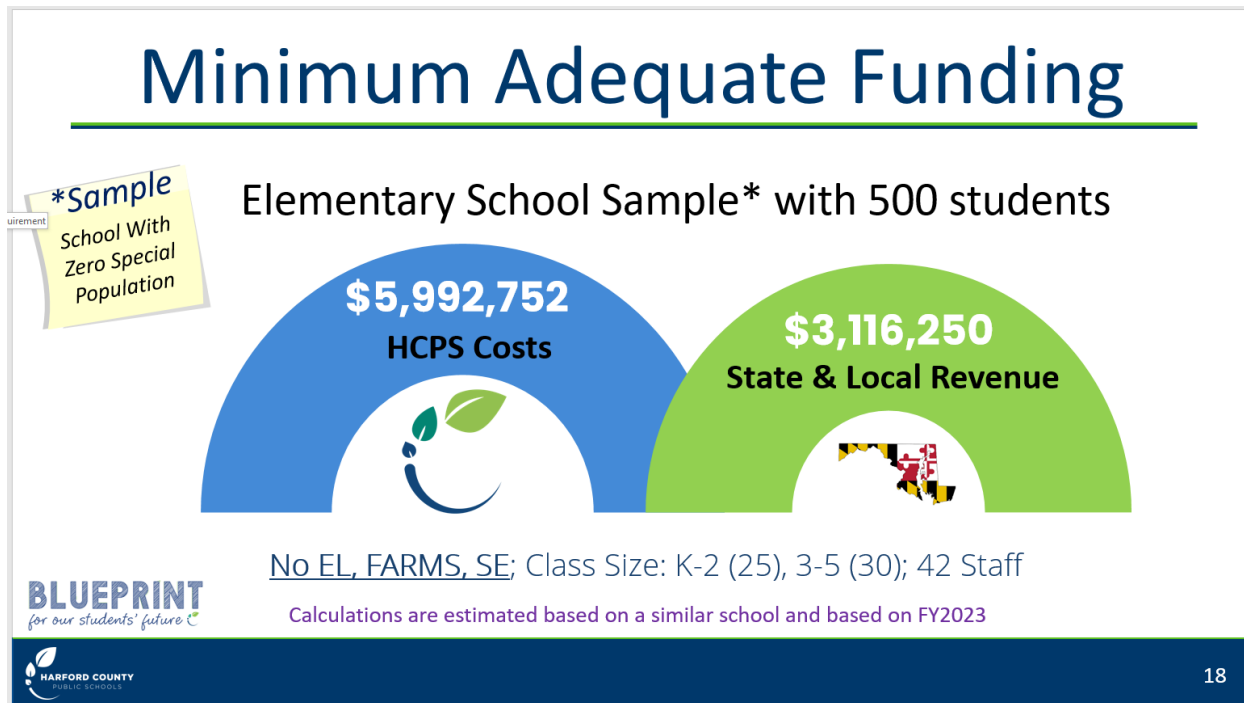


HCPS's investment in Oracle for budget modeling is a significant advancement in financial management and commitment to Blueprint outcomes. With Oracle's comprehensive platform, HCPS gains the ability to dissect and analyze budgetary data in diverse ways previously unattainable. Through Oracle's

sophisticated analytics, HCPS can fuel innovation, enabling the district to optimize spending and ultimately enhance educational outcomes for students. This investment in Oracle represents a commitment towards data-driven decision-making.

Minimum School Funding: HCPS has conducted modelling around the minimum adequate funding:





Through analysis, HCPS schools can meet the minimum adequate funding requirements in aggregate, but also require additional local funds to maintain operations. One model shown above demonstrates the costs to operate a sample school with no special population within the current HCPS service model and how much the minimum adequate funding provides. As the model shows, HCPS would require additional local funds to operate the school, as the minimum adequate funding will not allow for full staffing of the school.

In 2019, a poverty multiplier was introduced to staffing ratios, which systematically increased the staffing allocation to schools with more significant socioeconomic challenges. The multiplier acted as a mechanism to reduce the student-to-teacher ratio at higher-poverty schools, recognizing that these schools required more intensive support to address the educational disparities. Last year, we debuted a Staffing Manual ([Reference: HCPS Staffing Manual](#)) offering a clear and transparent methodology for distributing staff resources among schools. For elementary schools, the manual outlines three Tiers of class sizes and, consequently, the number of teachers based on FaRMs rates. These Tiers are defined as 0-50%, 50.1-75%, and 75.1-100% FaRMs rates, with the higher the Tier, the smaller the class size. At the secondary level, teachers were allocated based on a targeted student-to-teacher ratio of 19 students per teacher. However, as part of the differentiated staffing approach, a FaRMs percentage multiplier was applied to the enrollment at each school. This artificial inflation of enrollment led to increased staffing allocations in schools with higher poverty rates, ensuring that students in these schools had access to the support they needed.

HCPS's earlier investment in different resources and staffing models through the HCPS Priority School program, introduced officially in 2022, is the cornerstone for meeting the minimum school funding requirement. This program departed from the conventional one-size-fits-all model that had been in place for years. The philosophy behind Priority Schools is to address the unique needs of schools located in historically impoverished areas by allocating more resources and attention to both students and staff. This approach involves differentiated staffing and budget allocations, offering additional professional development, coaching, and priority hiring windows to ensure these schools can access the best available resources.

Key positions, such as teacher specialists, literacy specialists, instructional coaches, and assessment and data specialists, have been provided through the Priority School designation, facilitating student

achievement. There are many examples within our student achievement data showcasing students' academic improvements at Priority Schools.


For the minimum school funding requirement, HCPS will update financial models through the new Oracle platform once guidance is provided to school districts. The guidance will determine the methodology for school level funding models. For instance, if guidance indicates that the minimum school funding requirement is calculated by spending category and not in aggregate, HCPS anticipates that the model will show need to readdress funding for English Learners. ***NEW*** Despite anticipated flat funding and reduction of teaching positions, the Superintendent has committed to adding 7 EL teachers next year (FY25) aimed at this potential gap in reaching the minimum school funding requirement. Overall, HCPS is committed to proposing a budget that meets the needs of every student and complies with the Blueprint requirements, which is reflected in the [BOE's Proposed Budget](#).


Budgeting annually and over multiple years: With dependency on federal, state, and local funds, it can be challenging for a school district to anticipate budgets over multiple years. For example, this year the [BOE's Proposed Budget](#) has a 40 million dollar shortfall, based on the Harford County' Governments released budget. This significant potential of budgetary swings is a challenge and a barrier to meaningful forecasting. Regardless, HCPS is committed to long-term planning and has capital investment priorities extending over ten years and a guidance document of priorities spanning 2024-2027. **Reference:** [Advancing the Strategic Plan](#)


Part of our long-term financial planning and efforts to meet the expectation for reallocation and minimum school funding is to conduct research and engage in community discussion about what is required and protected under the Blueprint and what historical spending or services may require hard financial decisions in the future. Helping our local leaders and community to understand the long-term picture, specifically regarding local funding, is part of our multi-year strategy. As the following graphics indicate, our local discretion for historical services is diminishing. Our ability to fund services that cost more than we are allocated will also apply a lot of pressure in the county (example, we receive around a million dollars in special education transportation funding, but it costs us around eleven million dollars to provide special education transportation).


HCPS Valued Services: We utilized our legal office to research the protection of the following services in Maryland and Federal law to understand how these services may need alteration in order to maintain financial stability. **Reference:** [Valued Services Research](#)


HCPS Valued Services



 Class size



 Safety & security



 Arts and music programs



 World Language



 Athletics, extra-curricular activities, and clubs


 Field trips, including Harford Glen


 Historically Small schools

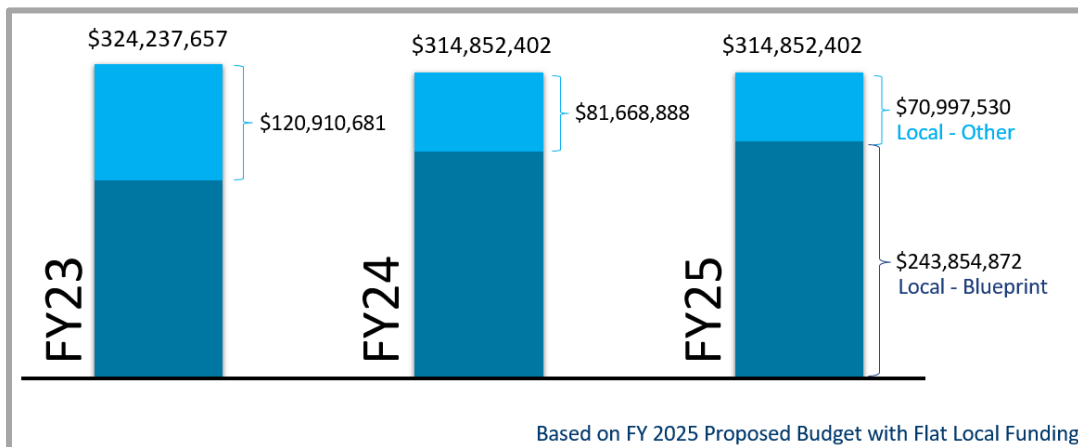
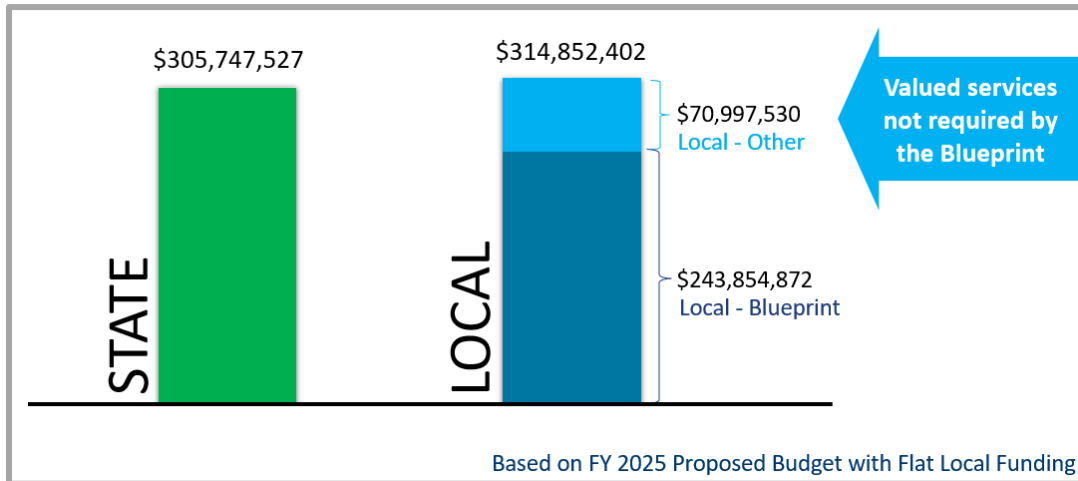

 Transportation


 1:1 Tech

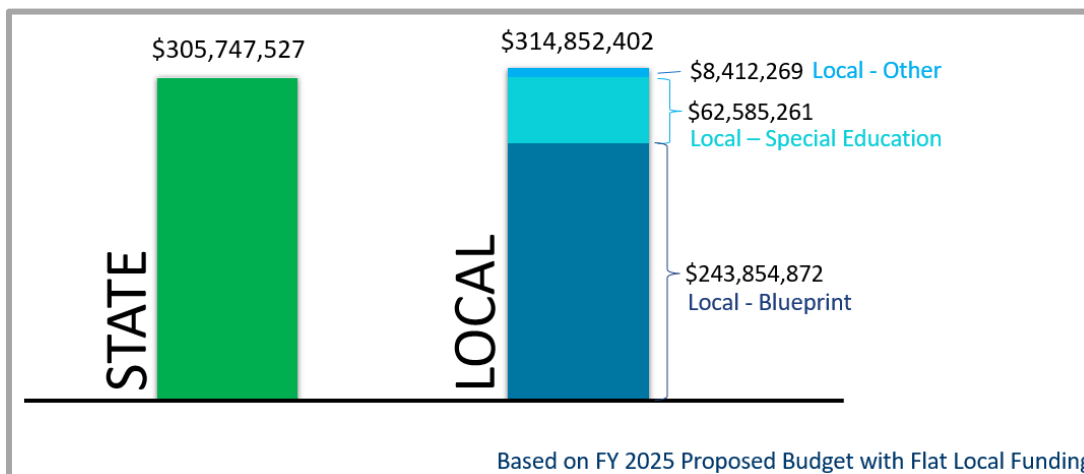

 Employee benefits

These valued services and programs are not required in the Blueprint.

HCPS State & Local Revenue Analysis: Local discretion for class size, safety and security, field trips, and technology all require funding outside of the Blueprint formulas, which on these graphics land in “Local -Other.” As the Blueprint local share increases, our local ability to maintain class sizes and valued services will continue to diminish.



HCPS spends around 62 million dollars more on special education than our revenue formulas directly provide. The cost exceeding the revenue continues to squeeze local ability to maintain historic services such as athletic programs, instrumental music, and more.



For multi-year planning we are evaluating the use of our fund balance to prevent significant cuts, but that balance too will continue to diminish. For FY25 we will look at the reductions pictured to the right. For multi-year planning we will continue to review the list of valued services not protected by the Blueprint legislation for what services need to be cut or reallocated to balance our insufficient budget.

Proposed FY25 Service Reductions

- Cancel summer school
- Operational efficiencies
- Fewer non-school-based positions
- Eliminate middle school sports
- Fewer safety liaisons
- Fewer nurses
- Eliminate athletic trainers
- Fewer teachers (class size increases)
- Smaller employee raises

Targeted funds:

CCR: The primary use of the per pupil CCR funding is the payment of tuition and books for dual enrollment. Additionally, two central CTE positions for post-CCR pathways are allocated through CCR.

Concentration of Poverty: The aim of investing in Community Schools is to enhance students' educational experiences, encourage active parental engagement, and contribute positively to the broader community. This is achieved by aligning expenditures with established frameworks, providing comprehensive support services, and addressing specific needs through a structured approach. To facilitate this, a collaborative leadership model involving both school administrators and Community School Specialists should guide financial decisions. These decisions prioritize practicality and effectiveness, focusing on delivering tangible benefits for academic, economic, and social empowerment within schools and their communities. Spending alignment varies depending on a school's designated year. In the first year, schools receive their Personnel Allocation, which is adjusted once a Community School specialist is hired. Schools then work with the Community School Cross Collaboration Leadership team to determine needs based on anecdotal data, Wellness Assessments, and school improvement plans. In the second year, budgets are built based on Community Needs Assessments and Implementation Plans. By the third year, schools typically receive their Per Pupil Allocation, leading to the creation of budget narratives and spending plans based on original and/or modified Implementation Plan and school improvement plans. Throughout all stages, monthly progress monitoring occurs through budget tracking and fiscal reporting by the grants accounting team.

TSI: When we look at TSI funds we prioritize professional learning for Pre-K to third teachers so that they are better prepared to provide reading instruction to our youngest learners and the purchase of high-quality materials.

- A position of an Early Childhood Literacy Coach to support instruction with K-3 teachers
- Science of Reading trainings such as LETRS cohorts, OG+ and a partnership with the Really Great Reading Company
- Intervention materials such as SIPPS, Istation licenses, and Dream Box math licenses
- Classroom library books for early childhood classrooms to support independent reading and transfer/application of skills
- Decodable texts from a variety of publishers to support small group targeted reading instruction and independent reading



HB-1372: In December 2023, HCPS reported the following in compliance with HB-1372 regarding state funding received to implement the Blueprint for Maryland's Future. [Reference: Harford HB1372-Sec3\(c\)-Amt Use State Fed Funds](#)

The following provides updated information of Blueprint expenditures for FY24 as of 3/31/24.

Pillar 1 Early Childhood	
Pre-K salaries and fixed charges	\$4,830,693
Pre-K other (contracted services, supplies, equipment)	\$58,868
Pillar 2 Elevating Educators	
NBC Salary incentives	\$882,336
Pillar 3 North Star College & Career Readiness	
CTE salaries and fixed charges	\$218,059
Dual enrollment fees	\$457,454
TSI Literacy Specialist	\$94,228
TSI PD - literacy	\$59,859
TSI materials and supplies	\$278,640
Pillar 4 Student Supports	
Comm Sch Spec salaries & fixed charges	\$942,888
Other sch-based staffing for COP schools	\$1,582,134
LEP salaries & fixed charges	\$1,442,780
LEP other (contracted services, supplies, equipment)	\$293,308
Comp Ed salaries & fixed charges	\$83,379,100
Comp Ed other (contracted services, supplies, equipment)	\$4,536,502
Pillar 5 Foundation and Accountability	
Salaries and fixed charges	\$209,214,307
Contracted services, supplies, equipment	\$35,215,049

HCPS stands committed to responsible resource management, epitomized by strategic investments such as the Oracle Enterprise system and targeted initiatives to support Blueprint objectives. With a focus on effective and high-quality staffing, effective services, and leveraging data-driven decision-making, HCPS is poised to optimize resource allocation, ensuring every student receives the support necessary for academic success.

Harford County Public Schools Nondiscrimination Statement

The Board of Education of Harford County Public School does not discriminate on the basis of age, ancestry/national origin, color, disability, pregnancy, gender identity/expression, marital status, race, religion, sex, or sexual orientation in matters affecting employment or in providing access to programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups.

In accordance with the requirements of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. §1681, et seq.), Harford County Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of sex in any of its programs or activities or with regard to employment. Inquiries about the application of Title IX, and its implementing regulations to Harford County Public Schools may be referred to Renee McGlothlin, Harford County Public Schools Title IX Coordinator, by mail to 102 S. Hickory Avenue, Bel Air, Maryland 21014, or by telephone to [410-809-6087](tel:410-809-6087) or by email to Renee.McGlothlin@hcps.org or the Assistant Secretary for the Office of Civil Rights in the United States Department of Education by mail to 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20202 or by telephone [1-800-421-3481](tel:1-800-421-3481), or both.